

MASTODON: NASHVILLE STUDIO EXCLUSIVE!

METAL HAMMER



STEEL PANTHER

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F*CKIN' GOOD TIME. AGAIN!"

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ROCK

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A collage of Emmure merchandise. At the top left is a black bandana with the band's name and logo. Below it are two vinyl records, one green and one black. To the right are several t-shirts and hoodies with various designs, including the band's logo and a stylized face. In the center is a black beanie with the band's name. Below the beanie is a black bandana with a white geometric pattern. At the bottom right is a black poster featuring a stylized face and the band's name. The background is a dark, textured surface.

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ETERNAL ENEMIES

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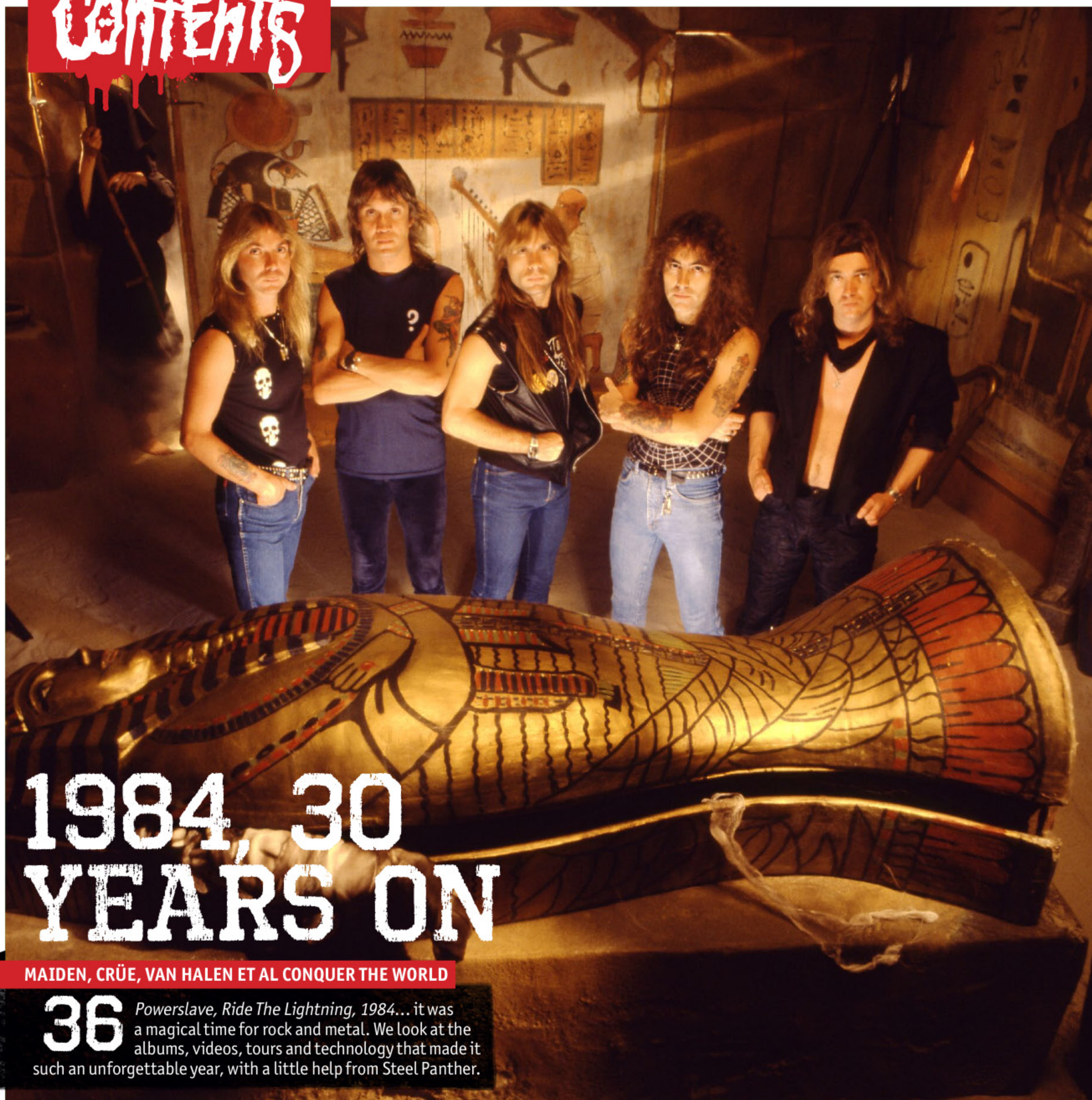
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1984, 30 YEARS ON

MAIDEN, CRÜE, VAN HALEN ET AL CONQUER THE WORLD

36 Powerslave, Ride The Lightning, 1984... it was a magical time for rock and metal. We look at the albums, videos, tours and technology that made it such an unforgettable year, with a little help from Steel Panther.



MISS MAY I

They're one of metal's brightest hopes and have their eyes set on one goal: to carry the torch and keep the flame alive when the metal gods decide to call it a day.



CRADLE

Cradle Of Filth founding members Dani Filth and Paul Ryan guide us through the chaos of their early years and just how ludicrous it was being labelled "satanic terrorists".



ZAKK WYLDE

It's been a good few years since Uncle Zakk last saw his chin and he intends on keeping it that way. We catch up with the icon and find out why he's happy to keep his former self in the past.



30 TAYLOR MOMSEN



16 CHRIS JERICHO



80 RONNIE JAMES DIO

WHAT WAS METAL'S GREATEST YEAR?

It depends on who you ask. Was it 1970, when Black Sabbath debuted a sound and vision that would blacken the world forevermore, or was it 1980 when in the span of 12 months you had landmark records from Motörhead, Iron Maiden, AC/DC, Judas Priest and more? Or could it be 1991, when the *Black Album* smashed the glass ceiling on metal music forever, or 1994 when Korn, NIN and Marilyn Manson brought new meaning to the word 'heavy'? For as long as metal exists the debate will rage on, but in the annals of metaldom 1984 will always stand head-and-



shoulders above the rest as one of extremes, excitement and – flipping through this month's jam-packed cover feature – a lot of guys in mascara. For a blow-by-blow, 30th anniversary celebration of a year that changed our music forever, turn to page 36. And with members of Of Mice & Men, Bullet For My Valentine, Municipal Waste, Halestorm, Emperor and more giving slightly dubious predictions on what our future holds, this is one of our heaviest issues yet. The way we see it, if you're gonna build a time-travel issue, you've gotta do it in style.

That's not all to feast your eyes on – with a fascinating look back at Cradle

Of Filth's earliest hellraising days, to an epic account of why Soundwave Festival rules, to some titillating details of Mastodon's feverishly awaited new record, to thrilling new music from Radkey, Animals As Leaders, Triptykon and more, who's to say 2014 won't be the one year to rule them all?

Before we hit 88mph, let's take time to remember Selim Lemouchi, founder of The Devil's Blood and one of the most talented musicians of a generation, who passed away far too soon at the age of 33. Our thoughts are with his friends and family at this difficult time.

Stay metal!

EDITOR-
IN-CHIEF

ON THE IPAD EDITION...



THIS MONTH'S DIGITAL EDITION IS PACKED WITH EXCLUSIVE METAL YOU WON'T FIND ANYWHERE ELSE.

- CRADLE OF FILTH ON THOSE EARLY DEMOS
- STEEL PANTHER GO BACK IN TIME
- MISS MAY I ON THEIR OHIO ROOTS

GET IT ON NEWSSTAND FOR
IPAD, IPHONE & IPOD TOUCH

GOLDEN GODS ARE GO!

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11 Tosin Abasi and his fellow prog princes return with another slab of tech metal glory. We find out what makes the guitar maestro tick.

BABYMETAL

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TAYLOR MOMSEN

30 Still think the actress-turned-rock-star is a poser? We raid her CD collection and find some very welcome surprises.

CANCER BATS

32 In light of increasing concerns over crowd safety, stagediver extraordinaire Liam Cormier explains why we *need* to get it right.

EUROPE & THE TREATMENT

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THE FUTURE OF METAL

54 Worried about the state of music in 20 years' time? Fret not! Our expert panel are here to shed some light!

DEZ FAFARA

72 Just before Devildriver come over to destroy the UK, we head to Chateau Dez to chat to the man behind the music.

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130 Dee Snider on how the PMRC got it wrong, near-death experiences and why he's the last person in the world you'd want to stalk!



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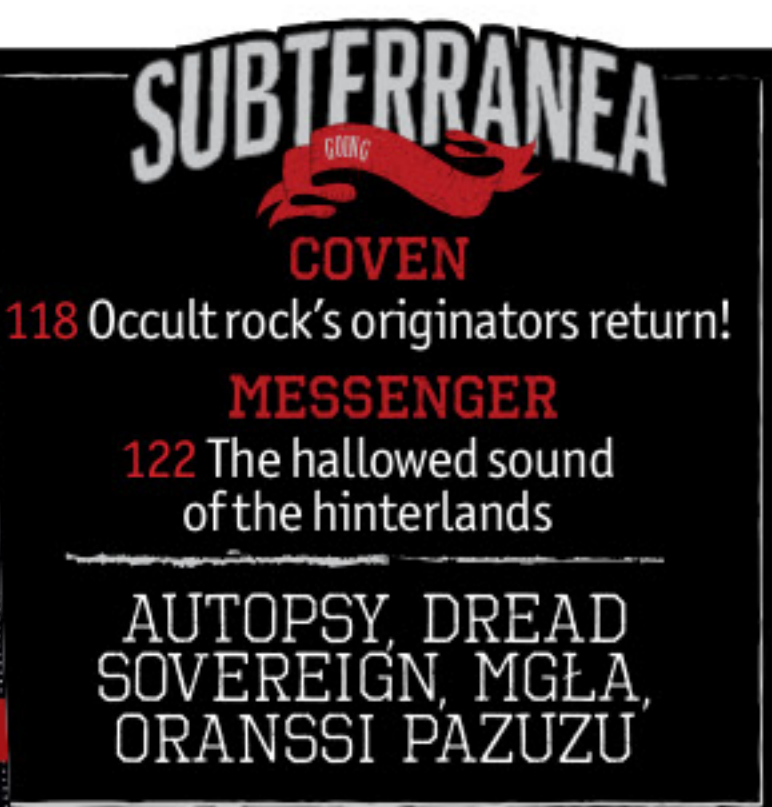
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TRIPTYKON MELANA CHASMATA



"When you look into the abyss, Tom G looks back at you"
ALEXANDER MILAS
DONNIE DORKO

ORANGE GOBLIN TIME TRAVELLING BLUES



"Looking forward to the new shit with some old shit"
JAMES ISAACS
DIVROS

PANTERA FBD 20TH ANNIVERSARY



"If you don't like Pantera, especially this album, you hate kittens and metal"
LEWIS SOMERSCALES
COCK BROWN

MONSTER TRUCK FURIOSITY



"Cannot wait for the Lords Of The Riff tour so I can finally see these guys live"
VANESSA THORPE
WHORLOCK

WOVENHAND REFRACTORY OBDURATE



"Incendiary rapture from one of the planet's few life-changing bands"
JONATHAN SELZER
HG HELLS

TRIPTYKON MELANA CHASMATA



"Guaranteed to send shivers down your spine for the rest of your miserable days"
AMIT SHARMA
DR AMIT BROWN

BABYMETAL BABYMETAL



"So wrong but... can't... stop... listening... please send help!"
DOM LAWSON
FARTY MCFLY

MISS MAY I RISE OF THE LION



"Ohio's finest have come back roaring"
MERLIN ALDERSLADE
DOCTOR POO



LETTER OF THE MONTH

NO SLEEPS 'TIL HAMMERSMITH

Was gutted that Loz from While She Sleeps had to go in for vocal surgery. *This Is The Six* was amazing, maybe not the game-changer everyone said it was but still a fantastic debut, and the future's looking very bright for them. I think they could fill big venues and can't wait for Loz to be back so that new album can arrive.

ALICE HAMILTON, FACEBOOK

Yup, backed to the maximum. While She Sleeps are one of our favourite young bands going and we have every confidence that not only will Loz be back to his very best soon, but that the new Sleeps album will be a proper world-beater. How could it be anything else, right?

SEND IN YOUR RANTS AND THE ONE THAT MAKES US LAUGH UNTIL WEE COMES OUT GETS A HOBGOBLIN SHIRT!



Get well soon, Loz!



BETTER LATE THAN NEVER...

I'm 49 and I just bought your magazine for the first time. Do I win a prize?

ROGER ENGLAND, FACEBOOK

Absolutely, Roger! You win our sincerest congratulations and love for discovering the best music magazine in the known universe. We know, we know, we're a generous lot.

MEGADULL

When are people going to stop sucking up to Dave Mustaine and Megadeth? He pulled an entire Australian tour just because of some stupid fucking spat with Newsted and Soundwave's organisers? Seriously? Some of the greatest thrash metal albums ever recorded, sure, but *Super Collider* was terrible and now it seems like people only give him the time of day on the chance he might say something stupid. Sort it out.

AMIR PATEL,
FACEBOOK

MegaDave will always be a big part of our world - his musical legacy will make sure of that - but it's probably not unjust to say that he's making as many headlines for controversial comments and incidents as he is for his music at the moment. Super Collider was hardly a world-beater, but we still think he can come back with something special. We hope...

BABY'S GOT A TEMPER

I can honestly say that as a fan of metal, I would far rather see Babymetal in the charts and as posters on kids' walls than One Direction or whatever the hell else young people are taught to obsess over. And you must admit, it's kinda catchy.

JAMIE BURNETTE,
FACEBOOK

Babymetal are, beyond a doubt, one of the most, erm, unique new bands we've

ever heard and seen. Teenie J-pop mixed with melodic death and thrash metal? OK, so it is kinda catchy. In fact, turn to page 12.

PAWS FOR THOUGHT

We don't need a metal cat book to show hard evidence that "while the music may be brutal blah blah blah". I don't care if people are put off by metal due to its image; fuck everyone trying to get metal into mass media, fuck people trying to make metal look good to large audiences by giving an image of cats and nice people dressing with nice suits. We get bands like A7X and we get emos at thrash concerts because they think they belong there. They're here because they think being part of a metal community will make them cool.

BAPTISTE AUVRAY, FACEBOOK

Man, you really hate cats, eh? Of course, it's a fair point that trying to "cute up" metal for mainstream consumption is fundamentally against the principles of what we're all here for. Does that mean that we can't have some fun? Almost certainly not. Does it mean we can't like cats? Absolutely, unquestionably not. Cats are awesome. And, like, totally metal and stuff.

KISS 'N' MAKE UP

Have any of you who are hating on Kiss actually listened to their 70s albums, from their debut in 1974 to *Love Gun* in 1977? Or their 1982 album *Creatures Of The Night*? There are some serious kickass rock'n'roll tunes on those albums and the band are a huge influence on a lot of metal bands as well.

ALEX WALKEY, FACEBOOK



Kiss: awesome

Dave Mustaine:
Mega-controversial?

REVELATIONS

THIS MONTH'S
HOTTEST METAL NEWS



GOLDEN GODS ARE GO!

Steel Panther, Dillinger, Dying Fetus and more for GG14!

Great Scott! This year's *Metal Hammer* Golden Gods are coming, and they're going to be bigger, better and more badass-er than ever! This is not, a drill, people – get your asses ready for some history!

Back for its 12th year, the Orange Amplification *Metal Hammer* Golden God Awards In Association With World Of Tanks is returning to its now regular and glamorous home at the rather spiffing IndigO2 venue in the O2 Arena complex in North Greenwich, London on Monday June 16 (yes, that's the day after Download, calendar nerds). As always, you can bank on a night of heavy metal prestige, drunken debauchery and a huge roll call of rock and heavy metal's biggest and loudest names.

And on that last point in particular, the Steel Panther boys did such a fine job taking us back in time and guiding us through the amazing year that was 1984 (see page 36) that we've asked them to host this year's awards!

Yes, Satchel, Michael Starr, Lexxi Foxx and Stix Zadinia will be your comperes for the evening,

taking us through the night's procedures and, we imagine, throwing in a ton of gags about drinking and drugs and sex and girls and, knowing what the Panther boys are like after a couple of fizzy drinks, various combinations of all of the above. Basically, it's going to be total fucking bedlam!

"Hosting the Golden Gods Awards is like getting five young hookers and an ounce of blow, all for free," comments Panther frontman Michael Starr in typically subtle and humble fashion. "I don't want to miss that party. You shouldn't either! We all know this is going to fucking rock."

Yes, yes it is. Speaking of rocking, the Golden Gods wouldn't be the iconic night it is without some kickass bands, and baby, do we have some kickass bands for you. In what has now become a sacred annual tradition as a part of the Golden Gods celebrations, HMS Hammer will once again be setting sail down the Thames for a special pre-awards show party, featuring some unmissable performances from some pretty epic names. We are particularly thrilled to

announce the frankly monstrous news that unstoppable eccentrics The Dillinger Escape Plan will be rocking up to lay waste to the pre-show boat gig, topping off another amazing 12 months for the band and, we expect, bringing another carnage-filled show with them. They will be joined by hotly tipped and devilishly dapper deathcore gangsters Upon A Burning Body, the mighty Kill Devil Hill (featuring Pantera's Rex Brown and ex-Sabbath drum legend Vinny Appice) and, fresh from what we assume will be an absolutely triumphant debut performance on the main stage at Download, ultra-brutal death metal heroes Dying Fetus.

We will, of course, have more neck-wrecking names to announce very soon, including an utterly mindblowing selection of metallic heroes who will be gracing the stage at the Golden God Awards ceremony itself.

Obviously, the most important part of the Golden God Awards is the much-coveted and very shiny awards themselves! Again there are a wealth of incredible bands nominated; from iconic legends to rising young guns, all are in the running, so to find the full list of nominees, head over to www.metalhammer.co.uk on April 7 when voting officially opens. Get stuck in!

In the meantime, stay tuned for more awesome

names set to be added to both the main bill and the pre-awards boat party, and watch out for details on how you can land yourself some free tickets to the show! Trust us, you won't wanna miss this one. See you on June 16, ladies and gentlemen. Let's get prestigious. ✱

**ORANGE AMPLIFICATION
PRESENTS... THE METAL
HAMMER GOLDEN GOD
AWARDS 2014 IN
ASSOCIATION WITH WORLD
OF TANKS TAKES PLACE AT
THE INDIGO2 ON JUNE 16**

**"THIS IS GONNA
FUCKING ROCK!"**



Upon A Burning Body: getting the debauchery started early



10 SELIM LEMOUCHI



12 BABYMETAL



16 CHRIS JERICHO



18 TRUCKFIGHTERS

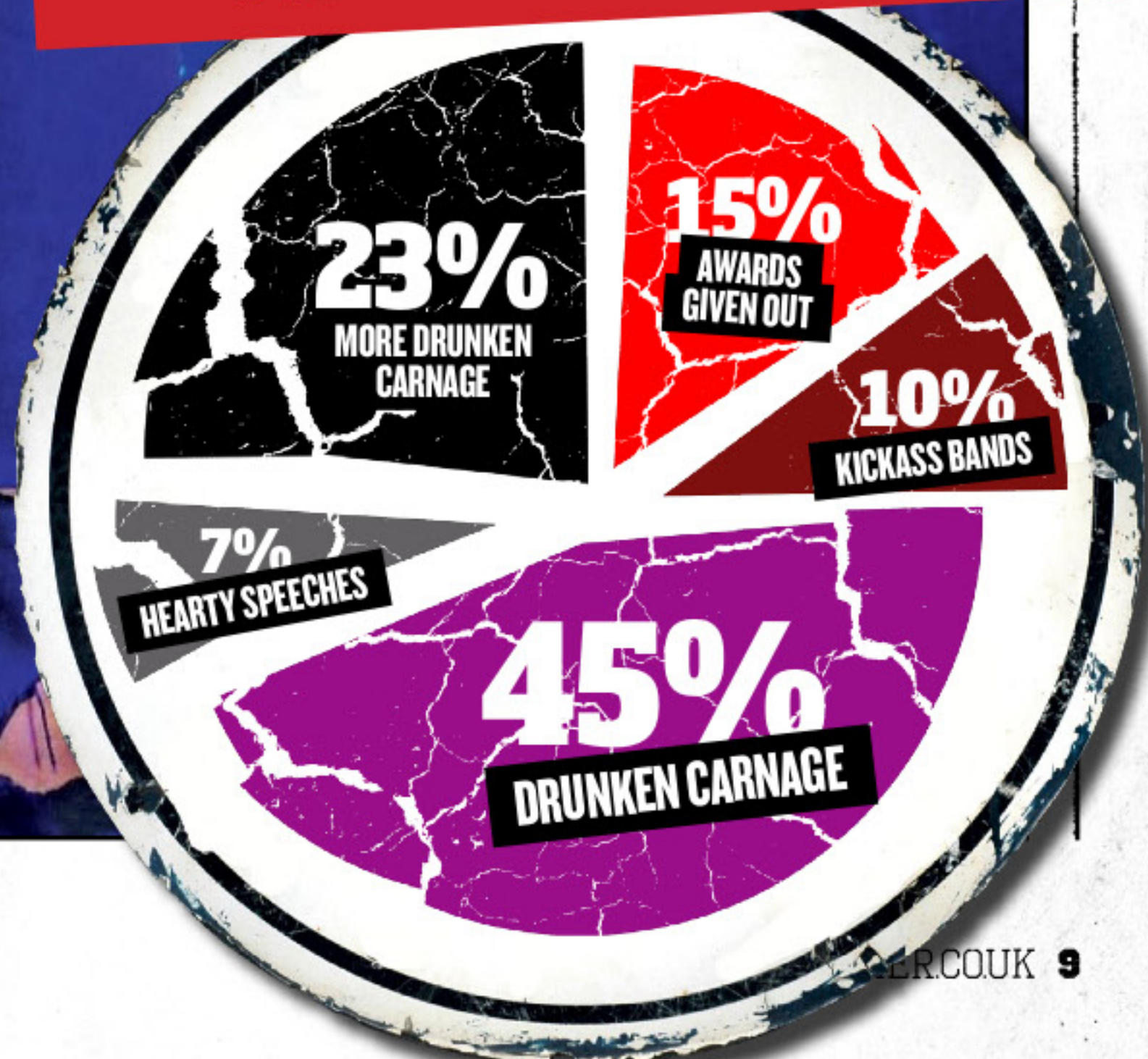


ORANGE
AMPLIFICATION
PRESENTS THE
HAMMER
GOLDEN GODS
2014
IN ASSOCIATION WITH
WORLD OF TANKS
XBOX 360 EDITION

Dillinger... on HMS
Hammer... oh fuck yes

GOING FOR GOLD

HOW THE GOLDEN GODS
USUALLY MEASURE UP



Dying Fetus: well...
why fucking not?



Gone, but he will never be forgotten

SELIM LEMOUCHI: 1981-2014

The Devil's Blood founder found dead.

Hammer was devastated to learn earlier this month that the insanely talented and thoroughly devoted Selim Lemouchi, guitarist and founding member of occult Dutch heavyweights The Devil's Blood, had passed away at the criminally young age of 33.

While the details surrounding Selim's death were still being clarified at time of going to press, his was a figure of immense profile and influence in rock and heavy metal's underground scenes, and his passing has been keenly felt by countless friends, peers and fans around the world.

"Our brother is not gone," stated Swedish brethren In

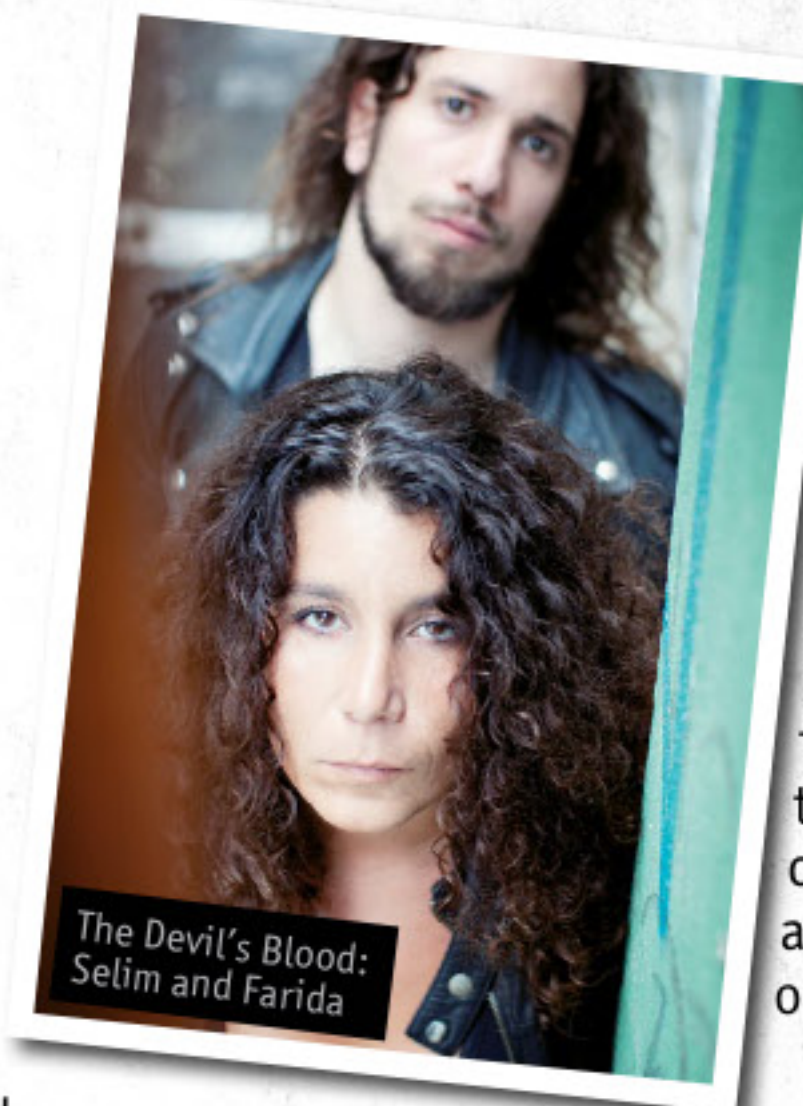
Solitude in response to the news. "We love you forever, Selim. Let us end it here like you always would end it with your brothers and sisters; death is the crown of all."

Roadburn Festival organiser Walter Hoeijmakers also paid tribute, adding, "Goodbye dear Selim. You were truly inspirational, artistically and personally. Thank you for the amazing music. Thank you for letting me be a small part of several rituals as DJ. Thank you for encouraging me. You will be sorely missed!"

The Devil's Blood's debut EP, *Come Reap*, landed back in 2008, signalling the arrival of Selim and his demonically talented sister, Farida, who blessed the

band with her extraordinary voice. Their work was championed by none other than Darkthrone icon Fenriz and released to international critical acclaim; the record harnessed the burgeoning occult and retro rock rebirth that was sweeping the underground, quickly establishing the band as one of the finest new artists of recent years.

A reputation as an awe-inspiring live band and Selim's legitimate affinity with Satanism both lent themselves to The Devil's Blood's impact, and over the course of three studio albums – 2009's *The Time Of No Time Nevermore*, 2011's career-defining *The Thousandfold Epicentre* and the band's posthumous *III: Tabula Rasa Or Death*



The Devil's Blood: Selim and Farida

And *The Seven Pillars* (2013) – they established themselves as the most wildly creative group amid a wave of occult rock bands.

Following the unexpected demise

of The Devil's Blood in early 2013, Selim initially took a step back from the spotlight, re-emerging with his new outfit, Selim Lemouchi & His Enemies, who garnered a similar level of critical acclaim with their ace, experimental debut album, *Earth Air Spirit Water Fire*.

His sudden passing is a shock to everyone here at *Metal Hammer*, and we would, of course, like to join everyone in mourning metal's loss and pay tribute to a truly brilliant artist. Safe travels, brother. ✕

**"OUR BROTHER IS NOT GONE.
WE LOVE YOU FOREVER"**

ANIMAL INSTINCTS



WELCOME BACK



AAL: prog's alpha males

✠ Is Animals As Leaders' Tosin Abasi the best guitarist in metal?

While instrumental tech metal bands like Chimp Spanner and Scale The Summit are enjoying their moment in the limelight, US tech protagonists Animals As Leaders have been quietly beaver away on their anticipated third album *The Joy Of Motion*, which promises to be a physical experience.

"Some of our material is so cerebral that you don't always get the visceral experience that you want," explains Animals' guitar wizard and creative nucleus, Tosin Abasi. "On this new album we wanted to have some tunes where you can put your body into it. There's a lot of groove going

on and it's just pretty aggressive the whole time"

Aggression. Not a word you normally associate with a singerless outfit, but as more and more heavy-weighted bands are putting soul-penetrating guitar licks at the forefront, it's paving the way for a strident breed of progressive musicianship. And in a world where tattooed 'core kids are shifting units, this Washington, DC crew have built a small empire of fans lapping up their instrumental soundscapes, which sound a bit like your Nintendo being played by Steve Vai.

"I spent a lot of my early years doing marathon practice sessions,"

says Tosin. "And I think it comes from loving to play guitar; it never felt like an obligation so I'd play for like five or six hours straight. Some of these other bands are limited to the genre – they're doing a great job and I'm sure it's what they want to do, but it kind of fits directly into a mould and they might have a hard time being valued outside of it."

After the work he did on Animals' debut album, Misha Mansoor from Periphery is once again lending his technical know-how to the creative process. "On the first album there were only two humans involved – I played guitar and Misha tracked some guitars. Everything else was the result of a mouse and some clicking, so people heard it and were like 'This is a robot band.'"

Things have moved on since that 2009 release and this now fully functioning band have played a wealth of gigs with bands including Deftones, Underoath and even "Satanic death metal bands from Scandinavia", as Tosin puts it.

Their mission statement is simple. "I want to represent my musical ideas and want people to feel like this is authentic. It's not a result of manipulation, it's real," Tosin declares. "We've actually had comments that people prefer the live versions better because there's so much energy and a human quality injected into it. We're kind of on that more nerdy tip and I think that gives us more longevity and more substance." ✠

THE JOY OF MOTION IS OUT NOW VIA SUMERIAN

"I PLAY FOR FIVE OR SIX HOURS"



Babymetal:
Gallhammer they ain't

METAL FOR DUMMIES

Babymetal have landed. Be afraid.

Unless you've been under a rock since birth, Japan's reputation for throwing up cultural curveballs will come as no surprise. But still, few could have anticipated the three-headed, pubescent hydra that is Babymetal.

Less of a band and more of a bizarre phenomenon from space, Babymetal are three J-POP starlets (Su-metal, Muametal and Yuimetal) who combine slamming mosh 'n' roll with cutesy schoolgirl harmonies that wouldn't sound out of place on a *Pokémon* soundtrack. Their recent *Give Me Choco!!!* video took the internet by storm, racking up a million YouTube hits in a day and gaining international coverage that bordered on the hysterical. Where the fuck has it come from?

"We wanted to make a special metal unit that only these three

members can form," the trio offer as a non-clarifying response. "It is a brand new metal genre that no one can duplicate. Since we can't just copy metal bands that usually consist of male adults, we had to do something that is our own."

While there's a rather *X Factor*-y whiff about the way this band has been put together and marketed (these answers came via email), it's hard to argue with a fanbase that seems to be exponentially expanding by the day. Hell, these supercute circlepit-starters even claim to count some of our beloved flagbearers among their fans: "During Summer Sonic Festival in Japan, we performed on the same stage as Metallica, Trivium and other metal bands. They came to see us. A lot of famous metal bands are Babymetal fans."

Like any gimmicky act, their longevity is open to question. What looks clear for now, however, is that they've tapped into a spirit of eclecticism that seems to be increasingly pervasive among hard rock's ranks. Indeed, even in Japan, where what Westerners might perceive as hokey contrivances are far more accepted, there is arguably a silver lining to be had no matter what the band's long-term prospects might be.

"In Japan there are fewer metal fans than there used to be," the trio tell us, "so our fans aren't just metal fans, but also many normal fans who like all kinds of music."

Interesting use of the word 'normal' aside (who are this band actually for, anyway?), if your way into the world of rock music is through this lot's bizarre genre-bending, then you'll probably be able to handle all the *really* bonkers stuff metal has to offer when you scratch that bit further. Plus, those songs *are* catchy... ✱

**BABYMETAL IS OUT NOW
VIA TOYS FACTORY**



ON YOUR COVER CD

15 MESSAGES
IN BLOOD!

1) DOWN

We Knew Him Well
NOLA's legends have done it again!
www.down-nola.com

2) HALFORD, APPICE, ALDRICH, PILSON, WARREN

Man On The Silver Mountain
An all-star cast pay tribute to an icon.
www.ronniejamesdio.com

3) CRADLE OF FILTH

Unbridled At Dusk
Unearthing the early demo by the UK extreme heroes.
www.theorderofthedragon.com

4) SABATON

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new album
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Radkey (left to right): Solomon Radkey, Isaiah Radkey, Dee Radkey

RAD MEDICINE

Danzig-loving punk rock from America's heartland? Count us in.

Without wishing to put too fine a point on it, metal, punk and rock remain, for the most part, the domain of the white man. There are, of course, some notable exceptions, but three black brothers from America's midwest who rock harder than a diamond-coated anvil is, to say the very least, still a somewhat unusual sight. But then, Radkey aren't a very usual band.

"It's definitely something we've noticed," confirms bassist and middle sibling, Isaiah. "I hope we can make people feel that they can do whatever they want, that if you're black you can be part of

this too and don't have to be a rapper or something. Although that certainly isn't the main part of what our band is about."

The 'main part' of Radkey to which Isaiah refers is their penchant for doling out rollicking punk rock, founded on Danzig-esque croon and rattling lo-fidelity guitar. Original it ain't, but damn it, when it's played this well and this earnestly, who gives a shit? "As a band we love groups like Metallica, The Sword and Red Fang, so we try to bring all those influences into what we do, too," offers Isaiah by means of explanation as to Radkey's heavier dabblings. "We've never

wanted to stick to one genre; if the song has a more 'metally' feel to it then we just go with it. We don't want to be boxed in."

That intention to swerve expectations is plastered all over Radkey's new material – their heaviest to date – with slow-ebbing doom noticeably working its way into the edges of the band's sound. Yet despite early signs of evolution, the trio are clear that this is still very much a project in its infancy, one driven primarily by a desire to escape a claustrophobic life. Perhaps it's exactly this that has made their rapid rise to fame, from hopping across magazines through the rock spectrum to appearing on flagship BBC music shows, all the more enticing. You don't get Trap Them on *Later With Jools Holland*.

"There's definitely a small-town vibe where we're from in Missouri," says Isaiah, "but it just

makes us work harder to get to where we want to be. It's definitely easier to be in a new band in New York or LA or somewhere like that, but things have moved pretty quickly for us, and doing ... *Jools Holland* and gigging in the UK has been crazy! We really appreciate everything that is happening at the moment but we're trying to take it all one day at a time."

And so for the brothers Radkey, the ambitions remain pleasingly simple: "We just want to release a good album," finishes Isaiah. "Something we can be proud of and that we can get out to as many fans as possible." Based on how they're doing right now, we reckon they're on the perfect path. ✱

THE FEED MY BRAIN EP IS OUT NOW VIA LITTLE MAN

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WHY I LOVE...

ANTHRAX

BY CHRIS JERICHO /
FOZZY

NYC'S THRASH KINGS ARE TRUE METAL MASTERS. CHRIS JERICHO TELLS US WHY HE'S STILL CAUGHT IN A MOSH.

WORDS: STEPHEN HILL ILLUSTRATION: MATT DIXON

THEY DESERVE BIG 4 STATUS

"I know a lot of people talk about Exodus and Testament and say, 'Oh, those guys deserve to be part of the Big 4!' but you can't include anyone else in amongst the calibre of bands like Slayer and Metallica. Anthrax are in there with the quality of those bands and, even though they seem to have been the ones that lost their way at times, they've earned the right to be considered one of only four bands in thrash that stand on top of their game and are rightly revered."

SCOTT IAN IS A METAL ICON

"Scott Ian is a great guy, a really good friend, and he's done an amazing job of branding himself as a true metal icon. Every band needs that instantly recognisable figurehead and Scott is definitely that guy. You think of a top hat and curly hair and you think of Slash, right? Well what do you think of when you think of no hair and a long goatee beard? Scott Ian, no question."

THEY ARE TRAILBLAZERS

"Anthrax brought a whole different vibe to this type of music. They

had this whole street, New York hardcore thing going on. They were the first band to mix metal and hip hop and they wore shorts! Now any band you see, there is gonna be a guy in shorts with a shaved head. From bands like Stuck Mojo and Korn in the 90s up to the whole metalcore thing, they broke the walls down for all those guys."

THEY ARE IN CAREER-BEST FORM RIGHT NOW

"I watched the Big 4 DVD, and Anthrax were just killing it! *Worship Music* is, to my ears, the second best album they've ever done after *Among The Living*. Who else in that group of bands – and don't get me wrong because I love Slayer and Megadeth and Metallica are Metallica – is putting out some of their best work right now? Only Anthrax. And that is a very rare thing 30-plus years into a band's career."

THEY CAN MIX IT UP WITH ANYONE

"If I was to look at the lineage of metal, then obviously we have the gods – the untouchables like Maiden, Sabbath, Metallica and Van Halen. Then there's the level below with Megadeth, Slayer and the like. Anthrax sit comfortably in that bracket. They've got such a wealth of material and such a long career behind them. They took Fozzy out on tour a few years ago and I got to play in some of the venues that I'd have been at as a crowd-member in my youth and, let me tell you, that was an honour and a thrill for me, because they are a legendary band."

THEY KNOW HOW TO BOUNCE BACK

"I know they've had their problems with their lineup, particularly the vocalist, over the years. But, as much as I respect John Bush as a singer, that



period was not the Anthrax that we know and love. So it made perfect sense to me when those Big 4 shows came along that they went back to the old, classic lineup and those

classic songs and re-discovered that special chemistry that they had with Joey Belladonna. You know it's very rare to find that kind of spark that those guys obviously have between them, so when you get it you have to hold onto it and, for me personally, I was delighted when he came back into the band. And I think that when you listen to *Worship Music* you can tell that they made the right decision. After well over a decade it was like 'Ahh! They're back! That's the band that I remember loving so much as a kid!'"

FOZZY PLAY DOWNLOAD IN JUNE. ANTHRAX PLAY SONISPHERE IN JULY



Anthrax: thoroughly deserving of their Big 4 status





TRUCK SHIT UP

Swedish riff dons Truckfighters are back from the desert, er, we mean snowy wasteland.

You don't need us to tell you about the great tradition of Scandinavian rock bands. From Hanoi Rocks to Turbonegro, they've been dishing out simple, fun riffola for decades now – and as 2014 continues to roll onwards, it's a tradition that shows no sign whatsoever of slowing down. But have you ever wondered where it all comes from? Sweden's returning kings of stoner grooves, Truckfighters, seem to think that they have the answer.

"It comes from the forest and the snow," says vocalist and bassist, Ozo. "We have all this landscape, it's like a desert landscape but with snow, the same as the bands who started the stoner rock scene."

Sand and snow? How is that the same? "Well, there are no

people in the desert," says guitarist Dango. "And there are no people in parts of Sweden. That isolation creates the same vibe, I guess."

In that context, you must admit that Dango – much like Truckfighters themselves – might be onto something here.

Not that rock and roll needs to make sense, of course; it just needs to make you move. So, regardless of its inspiration, Truckfighters' new album, *Universe*, their first in five years, is an iron-clad winner. It expands on the straight-ahead desert blues of previous albums, while adding dashes of prog-like

experimentation to their huge riffs. The result is a record that could be held tightly to the bosom of Mastodon and Kylesa fans as much as it would those who delight in the pure rock fury of Orange Goblin or Fu Manchu; in fact, it's a noticeable and decidedly welcome addition to their sound. So, firstly, what made them take that particular fork in the road and, secondly, where the hell have they been for so long?

Half a decade? Come on, lads! "Oh, we were just touring and writing," is Ozo's fairly cagey response. "We also went through as many drummers as Spinal Tap, so hopefully we have a settled lineup now [with current stool incumbent Poncho]."

So if that's where they've been, what about the change in sound? "Well, if people ask," Dango replies,

"I usually say that we've tried to become a cross between Tool and Queens Of The Stone Age. We wanted to take the metal and the technicality and the intelligence of Tool, whereas Queens are the more melodic and the more straightforward and simple parts."

It's hardly stoner rock, is it? "I don't think the stoner rock tag fits us at all any more," Dango continues. "We get it a bit because of, I don't know, our guitar tones maybe? We are so far away from that now. We would really consider ourselves progressive, alternative metal now."

We're tempted to ask how that sound fits into the snow/sand metaphor the band mentioned at the start, but we won't. Instead, with an album this strong to play live, we'll just request that they don't spend another five years up in the forest.

"Nah, we'll be coming over to play a lot," says Ozo. "And people should expect the craziest show that, maybe, they've ever seen!"

UNIVERSE IS OUT NOW VIA CODE 7

"STONER? ACTUALLY WE'RE PROGRESSIVE"



Xilva lining:
Nexilva's techy,
sympho-death

HOT NEW BAND



PROTECT YA NEX

Sunderland ragers Nexilva have spent years refining their devastating death metal onslaught. Now it's their time to shine.

While they may be a relatively new name for a lot of people, Sunderland's fast-rising death metallers Nexilva have been busy beaver away for a number of years now, making a name for themselves as one of the most exciting new bands on the British extreme metal scene. Years of relentless touring led to well-received sets at last year's TechFest and Germany's Euroblast festivals, drawing them to prog nerds and underground devotees alike, but the band's story goes back a lot further. In fact, although there have been some amazing changes along the way, Nexilva's origins can be traced back to when the boys were fresh-faced 13-year-olds. And they couldn't have sounded more different back then.

"When we started out it was more of a pop-punk sort of thing," muses drummer Connor Jobes with an air of amusement, while recalling the band's humble beginnings. Sorry, it was *what*? "We started out covering Fall Out Boy songs and stuff like that."

Needless to say, they've come a long way from those baggy shorts days. Songs about getting dumped and grazing your knee from falling off your skateboard are all well and good, but luckily for us, they've been

"WE STARTED OUT AS A POP-PUNK THING!"

swapped for Nexilva's own blistering, keyboard-sprinkled breed of death metal.

Following in the footsteps of scene trailblazers such as The Black Dahlia Murder and Whitechapel, their songs come fast and nasty. However, there are many layers to the band that mark them out as quite the enigmatic bunch. While their music is bludgeoning, there are also technical leanings that point towards contemporary prog and tech metal, not to mention an array of symphonic and atmospheric synths.

"There's all sorts of things going on that you wouldn't normally hear in a death metal

band," enthuses Connor. "I do believe that how diverse our sound can be means we can appeal to people from most scenes."

After a lengthy recording process, this April sees the release of their debut full length, *Eschatologies*. As well as firmly establishing Nexilva as a band to unite various metal tribes and stake their claim as one of death metal's most convincing young talents, this is also an album

that embraces the prog trait of storytelling with a dark narrative.

"All of the songs on that album are all stories on how humanity brings its own end, in many different ways," Connor explains. "There's a recurring line in the album that's on quite a lot of the songs, and that's evil will prevail."

Delivering heaviness that is as thrilling as it is ferocious, now is very much the time for Nexilva's breed of evil to prevail. ✱

ESCHATOLOGIES IS OUT APRIL 7 VIA GHOST MUSIC

POWERSLAVES

Heavy riffs and special guests see Dragonforce let rip on their new album.



Dragonforce: back with a vengeance



The UK's power metal heavyweights Dragonforce have been busy lately, beavering away on album number six and ensuring that we have some very special surprises in store. The opus, titled *Maximum Overload*, will serve as singer Marc Hudson's second with the band since arriving in 2011, and according to lead guitarist Herman Li, his sterling debut on 2012's *The Power Within* gives the band plenty of confidence moving forward.

"I think that *The Power Within* was a difficult album to make, because it was Marc's first album," muses the flame-fingered shredder. "He picked up some amazing experience doing that

and the tour, and that should make this album much easier."

As for how Marc has done this time around, Herman reckons he's only getting better and better on *Maximum Overload*.

"Marc as a singer is much more confident," reveals the guitarist proudly. "He's been in the band for a few years now, so he's not afraid to try new things. He's doing really well!"

Musically, the album – which has been recorded at Fascination Street Studios in Sweden with producer Jens Bogren (Opeth, Devin Townsend, Amon Amarth) – looks set to add to the 'Force's trademark, shred-heavy sound with some new tricks, and let's

not forget a special guest appearance...

"It's got some really heavy songs," adds Herman. "Of course, with Dragonforce you've always got some fast stuff, and this time there's even *faster* stuff, but really, this is even more dynamic than *The Power Within*. We've also got [Trivium's] Matt Heafy on the album; he's singing with Marc. It sounds massive!"

Never the subtlest of bands going, it looks like Dragonforce are going bigger and harder than ever with *Maximum Overload*. Watch this space. ✱

MAXIMUM OVERLOAD IS OUT AUG 18 VIA EARMUSIC. GO TO WWW.METALHAMMER.CO.UK TO HEAR AN EXCLUSIVE TRACK FROM THE ALBUM RIGHT NOW!

"THIS SOUNDS MASSIVE!"

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Fast becoming one of the biggest British wrestling companies, ICW have established themselves as the UK hardcore wrestling fan's product of choice. Further to that, their blood-splattered matches are metal as fuck and few wrestlers have summed that up better than current chief 'heel' (that's 'bad guy'), Chris Renfrew.

"My love of metal goes back to my first year of high school when I was given a Marilyn Manson tape, *Antichrist Superstar*," says Chris, who wears gnarly band t-shirts as his entrance attire. "When *Irresponsible Hate Anthem* kicked in, I felt something rise up inside me. I knew I had fallen into something new."

As for pro-wrestling's ongoing affinity with metal culture, Chris adds: "What is more badass than Triple H coming out to *For Whom The Bell Tolls* at Wrestlemania? Metalheads and wrestling fans are the weirdos, the creeps and outcasts who get together as one and be themselves."

Head to www.insane.wrestling.co.uk to find out more about ICW.

FIRING RANGE WHAT THE INDUSTRY'S SETTING ITS SIGHTS ON...

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Wolves Like Us: passionate chaps

HOWLING SUCCESS

Norwegians Wolves Like Us stand by their principles with their second album.

Hailing from Oslo, Norway, Wolves Like Us came of age surrounded by the extreme sounds that most of us associate with the land of the midnight sun. "I actually grew up in the same town as Mayhem," laughs singer and guitarist Larsh Kristensen. "I used to play football right next to the barn where they practised!"

But while WLU have a deep-seated love of heavy fucking metal ("Proper metal like At The Gates, not that bullshit like Bring Me The Horizon"), they also combine the melodic

punk rock sensibility of Leatherface, Hot Water Music and Hüsker Dü into their dense, intense racket. In fact, as the band return with their second album, it's those more mellifluous influences that are prevalent in their sound. "Without wanting to sound like a pretentious twat, I think *Black Soul Choir* is a much more mature record than [our previous full length] *Late Love*," offers Larsh. "I wouldn't want to make the same album twice and I don't think we have. This time around we recorded with Mike Hartung, who has done a lot of

Norwegian post-hardcore stuff. He's actually American, and there's a radio-friendly element to this new record, more than before because of him. It was great to have someone come in and scrutinise what we were doing."

That is not to say that Wolves Like Us will be bothering the Top 10 any time soon, their spiralling riffing and impassioned, whiskey-soaked delivery ensuring that their trademark grit remains in spades. "It's like anything – we want to elaborate on what we've done before and keep making the music we love," finishes Larsh. "This band has, and will always be, about the passion above anything else." ✖

BLACK SOUL CHOIR IS OUT NOW VIA PROSTHETIC

"WE'RE ABOUT THE PASSION"

EARTH ROCKERS

You don't get signed to Clutch's label without packing a few riffs.

Chequered shirts, caps and beards. A quick look at Lionize's promo pics and you'll already be able to take some kind of shot in the dark at the kind of riffage they ply. Learn that they're signed to Clutch's Weathermaker label and you'll be even further into recognisable territory...

"We've been touring with Clutch for the better part of seven or eight years," says singer/guitarist Nate Bergman. "Weathermaker is the only label

in the world that makes sense for us, and it's home to the best rock band on the planet."

Take a chance on their soulful, bluesy hymns when they tour the UK with Clutch next month and you'll see exactly why they've landed such a prestigious home.

"The history of rock'n'roll in the UK is a rich one," adds Nate. "We couldn't be more pleased to go and play to Clutch fans!" ✖

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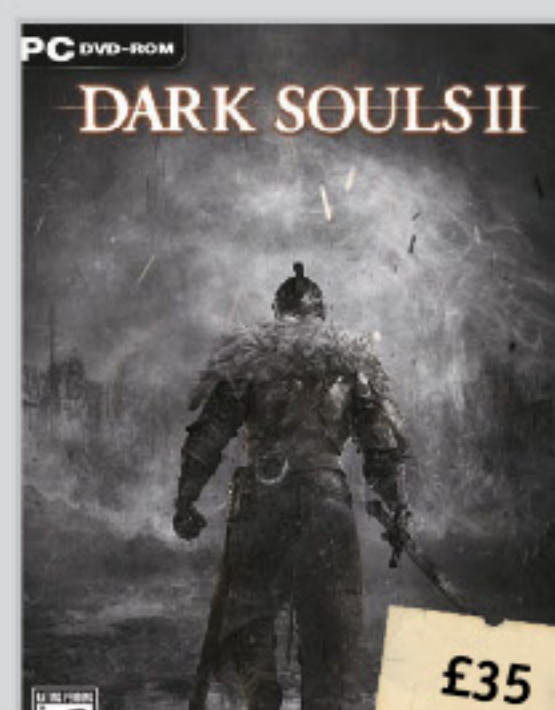
SUPERUNKNOWN: SUPER DELUXE EDITION

| A & M |

Universally acknowledged as Soundgarden's finest hour (well, 70 minutes to be more exact), *Superunknown* saw the Seattle band's journey from sludgy, Sabbath-laden grunge to fully fledged psychedelic rock behemoths, pulsing out everlasting classic tracks such as the Beatles-channelling *Black Hole Sun*, and yes, *Spoonman*, still one of the most irresistible tracks of their entire career. *Superunknown* was a turning point for rock music and A&M Records are celebrating its 20th anniversary with an aptly glorious box set that, true to the band's overall trajectory, marks out the album's evolution from its early stages through to a 5.1 *Blu-ray* audio mix. It's all ranged across four CDs – containing a remastered version of *Superunknown* itself, B-sides and previously unreleased alternate mixes, demos and rehearsals, plus the aforementioned *Blu-ray*. It's all housed in an eye-popping hardbound book featuring a lenticular cover, new artwork by former Neurosis visionary Josh Graham, liner notes by David Fricke and previously unpublished pictures by renowned photographer Kevin Westerberg. For those on a tighter budget, there's a two-disc version featuring various demos, rehearsals, B-sides and alternate mixes alongside the main album, and the band are also celebrating Record Store Day on April 19 by releasing the album as a double-vinyl gatefold on top of a limited edition 10-inch vinyl box collecting all the singles and B-sides across five discs. *Superunknown* has just gotten way more super.

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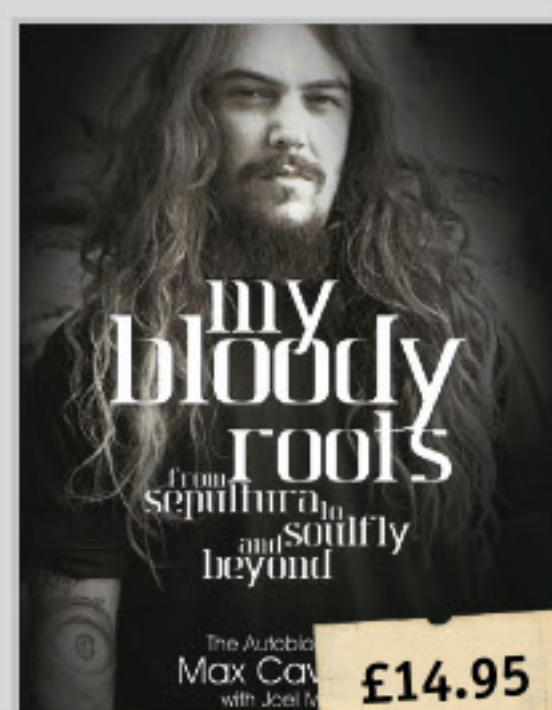


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Written in collaboration with Joel McIver, Max Cavalera's tempestuous autobiography takes us through his Brazilian upbringing, personal tragedies, the rise of Sepultura and its schism, and the formation of Soulfly. More a monologue than prose, it still narrates a unique story that mixes tales of excess with personal exorcism.

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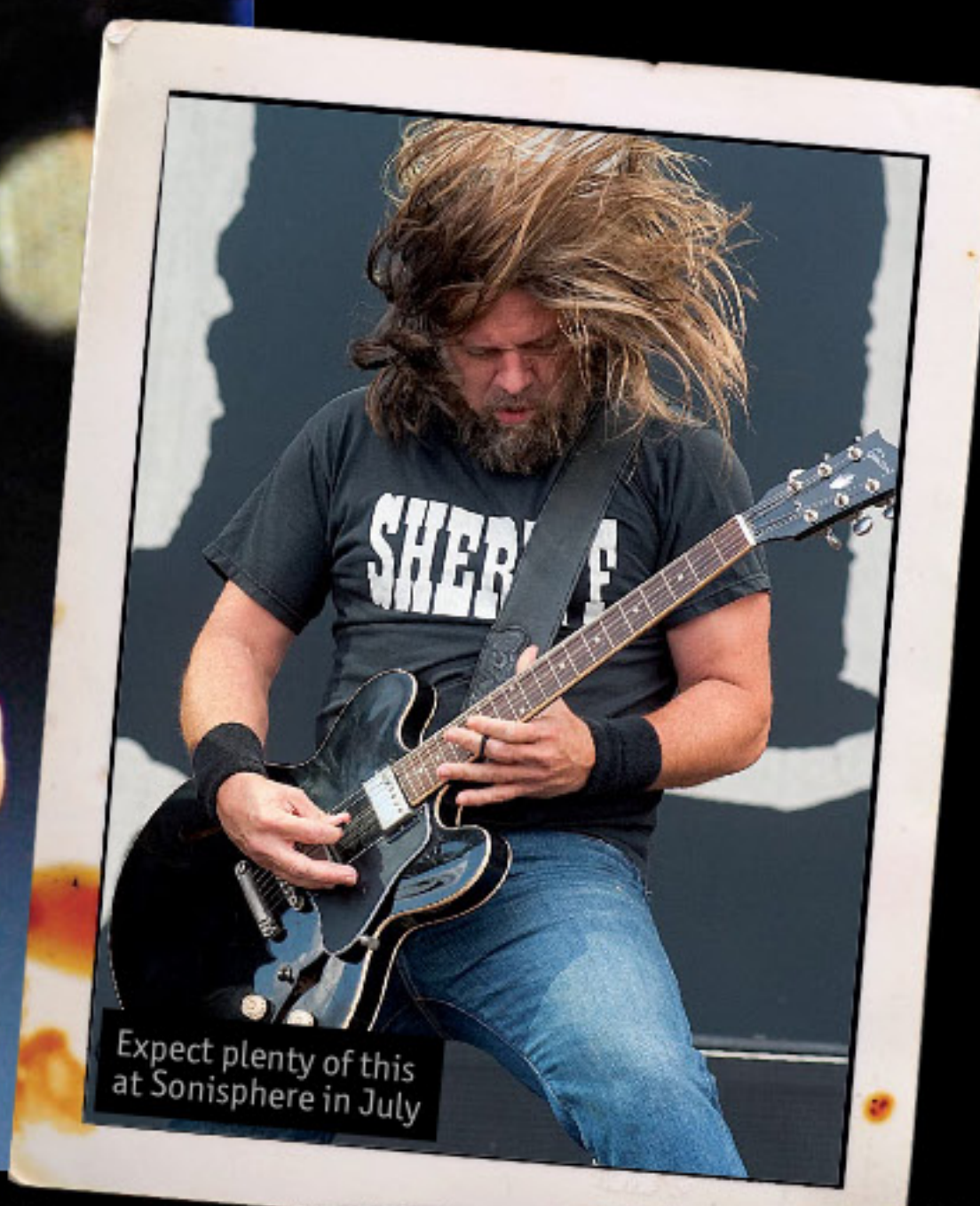
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METAL HAMMER WORLD

BEHOLD OUR EMPIRE

"More personal" - Joe's laying his soul bare



MONSTER MASH

Gojira open up on the new album on *The Metal Hammer Show*!

Gojira frontman Joe Duplantier appeared on *The Metal Hammer Magazine Show* on TeamRock Radio earlier this month to talk exclusively about the French metal behemoths' new album. The guys have been busy writing their asses off for most of 2014 so far, and aside from a few dates booked to shake the cobwebs away – including a stop-off at the UK's own, returning Sonisphere in July – that seems to be the plan for some time yet. Expected to make an appearance towards the end of the year, the follow-up to 2012's incredible *L'Enfant Sauvage* looks set to be another awesome,

emotionally charged slab of groove-fuelled metal majesty.

"It's hard to tell," offers the singer/guitarist of the direction of the new opus. "I'd love to be able to say where we're going, but we're halfway through the writing, which is already great. I already know that we have some really, really cool riffs and really cool ideas. I've started to feel what I want to say, and we have some very cool things. We go back to our roots a bit – some of the tones are really death metal – so we incorporate that into something slower and heavier. And catchier! Don't be scared; being catchy is not a bad thing!"

Joe also revealed that his lyrical approach to the album will continue to address some of the themes seen last time out, taking them into even deeper, rawer territories. "Something I started with *L'Enfant Sauvage* was that I talked more precisely about my demons," he adds. "Before, I was just talking about fear in general, when you get stuck in a situation inside. Now, I go deeper. It's becoming more personal. I'm not scared to talk about my fear, my jealousy and my weaknesses in a more precise way."

It's shaping up to be an emotional offering, so watch this space for more news, and make sure you grab your Sonisphere tickets to

see the guys back in action from www.sonisphere.co.uk.

In the meantime, head to www.teamrockradio.com, where you can stream a ton of our recent radio shows featuring special guests like Down and Corrosion Of Conformity's Pepper Keenan, Crowbar's Kirk Windstein, Neil Fallon from Clutch and Upon A Burning Body. We are now syndicated in several countries, with our show beaming out each and every weeknight from 9pm on TeamRock and available On Demand thereafter, so you really have no excuse not to get involved. Tune in, rock out. It's a simple formula. ✱

"WE'RE GOING BACK TO OUR ROOTS!"

**THE METAL HAMMER
MAGAZINE SHOW ON
TEAMROCK RADIO BEAMS
IN AT 9PM GMT EVERY
WEEKNIGHT**

GOLD PEDAL

Heavy Metal Truants get ready to ride out.



Rod Smallwood: pedal power



Tired and happy Truants at last year's Download



As we announced last month, Heavy Metal Truants is back for 2014!

A host of metal names will be following in the footsteps of the likes of Trivium bassist Paolo Gregoletto, Perry from Pendulum, Tesseract's James Monteith and legendary Iron Maiden manager Rod Smallwood by saddling up for a 161-mile charity bike ride from London's Alexandra Palace all the way to Donington for Download Festival 2014 – and you can be part of it!

This year will see our target donation amount raised to £100,000, meaning that there's plenty of work to do to help some very worthy causes. This year's ride sets off at the crack of dawn

from London's Alexandra Palace on Wed June 11 and will finish around midday on the Friday in time for the start of Download 2014. Entrants are asked to contribute an entry price of a minimum of £250 towards the costs (which are actually around £550 per head), which covers everything except your beers.

Tickets for Download are *not* included, but on arrival you do get to spend all day Friday in the *Metal Hammer* tent backstage and wander off to see any bands you want – and maybe even get a pint or two of Trooper. You must also pledge to raise or pay a further

minimum of £1,300 for our three charities of choice: Childline, Teenage Cancer Trust and Nordoff Robbins. Once your target is met, all that's left is to get training and get ready for the ride of a lifetime! On yer bikes! ✖

WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? HEAD TO WWW.HEAVYMETALTRUANTS.COM FOR MORE INFO

JUST DESERTS

We've got our own stage at Desertfest. Badass.

We've been big supporters of Desertfest – London's mighty stoner, doom and sludge-heavy, multi-venue annual shindig – since it first reared its hazy head back in 2012, so it goes without saying that we've always fancied the idea of getting our mitts involved in it somehow.

Well, we are delighted to confirm that for the first time ever, we're going to have our very own stage! Fuck yeah! On Friday April 25, *Metal Hammer* will be taking over the Black Heart in Camden as a part of this year's riff-fuelled and booze-soaked shenanigans, and as we didn't want to take the opportunity

lightly, we decided to bring some kickass bands along with us.

As well as some very special guest DJ slots on the night, we're delighted to announce that the following bands will be rocking up to play the *Metal Hammer* stage: Gothenburg riffers Horisont, bluesy German brothers-in-arms Zodiac, bleak, slugged-up Londoners Necro Deathmort, fuzzy rock heroes The Earls Of Mars and the heavy metal hurricane that is Death Ape Disco! There'll be more names and those DJ spots to come, so watch www.metalhammer.co.uk for updates!

Desertfest 2014 takes place across various venues in Camden, London, from April 25-27 and



features the likes of Kvelertak, Boris, Spirit Caravan, Weedeater, Dragged Into Sunlight, Sasquatch, Blues Pills and many more. Head to www.thedesertfest.com for more info and tickets. ✖

KEEP AN EYE ON WWW.METALHAMMER.CO.UK FOR MORE ANNOUNCEMENTS

VIDEO NASTIES

Our mission to become undisputed kings of awesomeness continues as our official YouTube channel strives to bring you the very raddest video features, exclusive interviews and live featurettes. This month we've had a totally (kind of) legit Japanese language lesson courtesy of our mate Ken from Crossfaith, plus catch-ups with this year's Lords Of The Riff headliners in Monster Truck and Scorpion Child, an exclusive chat with Him frontman/heartthrob Ville Valo and, as ever, Dom's Iron Sandwiches. From thrash legends to r'n'b metal noobs, it's all there. Head on over to www.youtube.com/metalhammer to get your fill.



SIMPLY THE FEST

Festival season continues to roll towards us at alarming pace with a wealth of new names added to some of metal's finest summer lineups. Recent additions to Bloodstock include Shining (NO.), Skyclad, The Mercy House, Krokodil, Avatar, Morgue Orgy and October File, while London's Beyond The Redshift added pg.lost, Abraham, Esben & The Witch, Bristolians Thought Forms, Greg Haines, Shield Patterns, Petter Carlsen, Hark, Atlantis and Canaya. Oh, and there's the small matter of Download packing one of its most diverse lineups yet and Sonisphere making an almighty return in July. Summer, we salute you!

REVELATIONS

NEWS ✱ COMMENT ✱ HEAVY FUCKING METAL



HOLY VISION

DIVINE SIGHTINGS

MASTODON IN THE STUDIO RECORDING THE FOLLOW-UP TO *THE HUNTER*

"We're just about done now, we're nearly finished

with mixing and next week we're mastering. Then there's a whole bunch of people who will weigh in with 'Oh, I'm not sure...' or 'Well, I don't know...' But we're done really. Usually people want their parts to be louder. I think everyone will be phoning up separately saying, 'Hey man, can you turn me up?' ha ha!

"It's a gorgeous album. It sounds like us, it sounds like Mastodon. It's a reflection of our past with a few songs that are a bit out there and show a new direction. There's some simple songs and some songs that are all over the place. It's so hard to explain what something sounds like, there's nothing I can say... it's like explaining what you see to a blind person who has never seen anything. But I can tell you that we are as happy with it as we were with previous albums. And I really think this is a true Mastodon album in the sense that everyone had a chance to touch each song. I think that's when we're at our best, when we can each give our take on it, our interpretation of things. It feels like every song is very rounded in that sense. *The Hunter* was a little lopsided in that sense, because we couldn't all be together for various reasons during the writing process, so you would have this guy's song and that guy's song.

"There's a lot of personal stuff on this record relating to things that happened in the past year. A bunch of personal stuff happened to different members, big changes, so it's mainly about that. It's always relationships, whether it be family members, or people passing away and so on. I think when people hear it, they will be able to understand."

BRANN DAILOR

TIPS OF DOOM

TAYLOR MOMSEN

THE PRETTY RECKLESS

HAMMER HAMMER

THE FIRST ALBUM I BOUGHT WAS...

THE BEATLES

REVOLVER [PARLOPHONE, 1966]

"My dad already had all the Beatles' albums on vinyl and cassette, but I bought them all on CD for myself. I'm a massive fan, I grew up on bands like The Who and the Beatles – I definitely got that from my father."

THE ALBUM WITH THE BEST ARTWORK IS...

PINK FLOYD

WISH YOU WERE HERE [HARVEST, 1975]

"They set a fucking dude on fire and took the most amazing photograph I've ever seen. We have all this fancy technology and Photoshop nowadays, but *nothing* looks as good as that. The picture they used was the very last one they took, because the second guy caught fire afterwards!"

THE ALBUM I WISH I'D MADE IS...

SOUNDGARDEN

BADMOTORFINGER [A&M, 1991]

"I'm a massive fan so I love all their records, but that's one of my favourites because it's just so badass. I can't get enough of the new one, either."

THE FIRST ALBUM I HAD SEX TO IS...

THE DOORS

THE DOORS [ELEKTRA, 1967]

"Jim Morrison's pretty fucking sexy and I'm obsessed with The Doors right now, but to be honest I'm not someone who puts on a record to have sex. Do people actually do that? I'd be putting on porn. I'd have sex to a Jenna Haze soundtrack – she's one of my really good friends."

THE ALBUM I BREAK THE SPEED LIMIT TO IS...

SYSTEM OF A DOWN

MEZMERIZE [AMERICAN, 2005]

"I actually don't have a driving licence – I've lived in New York my whole life so I never needed one – but when I'm in the car and



NO ONE WILL BELIEVE I OWN A COPY OF...

VARIOUS ARTISTS

BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER OST [ROUNDER, 2002]

"I'm a really big Buffy The Vampire Slayer fan so I have the soundtrack to the musical episode that they did – I generally don't have a big thing for musicals but I just love Buffy. I want to be Buffy. That's probably the weirdest thing I have."

A KID ASKS ME WHAT METAL IS, I HAND THEM A COPY OF...

METALLICA

MASTER OF PUPPETS [ELEKTRA, 1986]

"There are so many different interpretations of what you could consider metal, but for me, if you want metal, it's gotta be *Master Of Puppets*."

THE PERFECT ALBUM IS...

THE BEATLES

ABBEY ROAD [APPLE, 1969]

"I'm such a huge Beatles fan and this is probably one of the first albums I ever heard. You simply can't go wrong with *Abbey Road*, there's not a single bad song on it... well, the Beatles never wrote a bad song in my opinion."

THE ALBUM THAT REMINDS ME OF SCHOOL IS...

SOUNDGARDEN

SUPERUNKNOWN [A&M, 1994]

"I was in and out of school so much that I don't even know what my school days were! But it was when I was high school age that I discovered Soundgarden and they really changed my life. I got completely obsessed with them, and with Pearl Jam and Alice In Chains, too... Nirvana I had already delved into, but that was a little more mainstream at the time."

THE ALBUM I WANT PLAYED AT MY FUNERAL IS...

THE PRETTY RECKLESS

GOING TO HELL [COOKING VINYL, 2014]

"I'd pick my own *Going To Hell*. I think that says it all really!"

someone else is speeding we're definitely cranking *B.Y.O.B.* Because I'm 20 years old and don't have a license, everyone makes fun of me and I feel like such a loser. Even my little sister can drive, and I can't – but at least I don't have to worry about getting into car accidents!"

A close-up portrait of Taylor Momsen with long, wavy blonde hair, looking directly at the camera. She is wearing a black top and a necklace with a cross pendant. The background is a textured, light-colored wall.

"I'D HAVE SEX TO
A JENNA HAZE
SOUNDTRACK"

TAYLOR MOMSEN

FOR THE RECORD

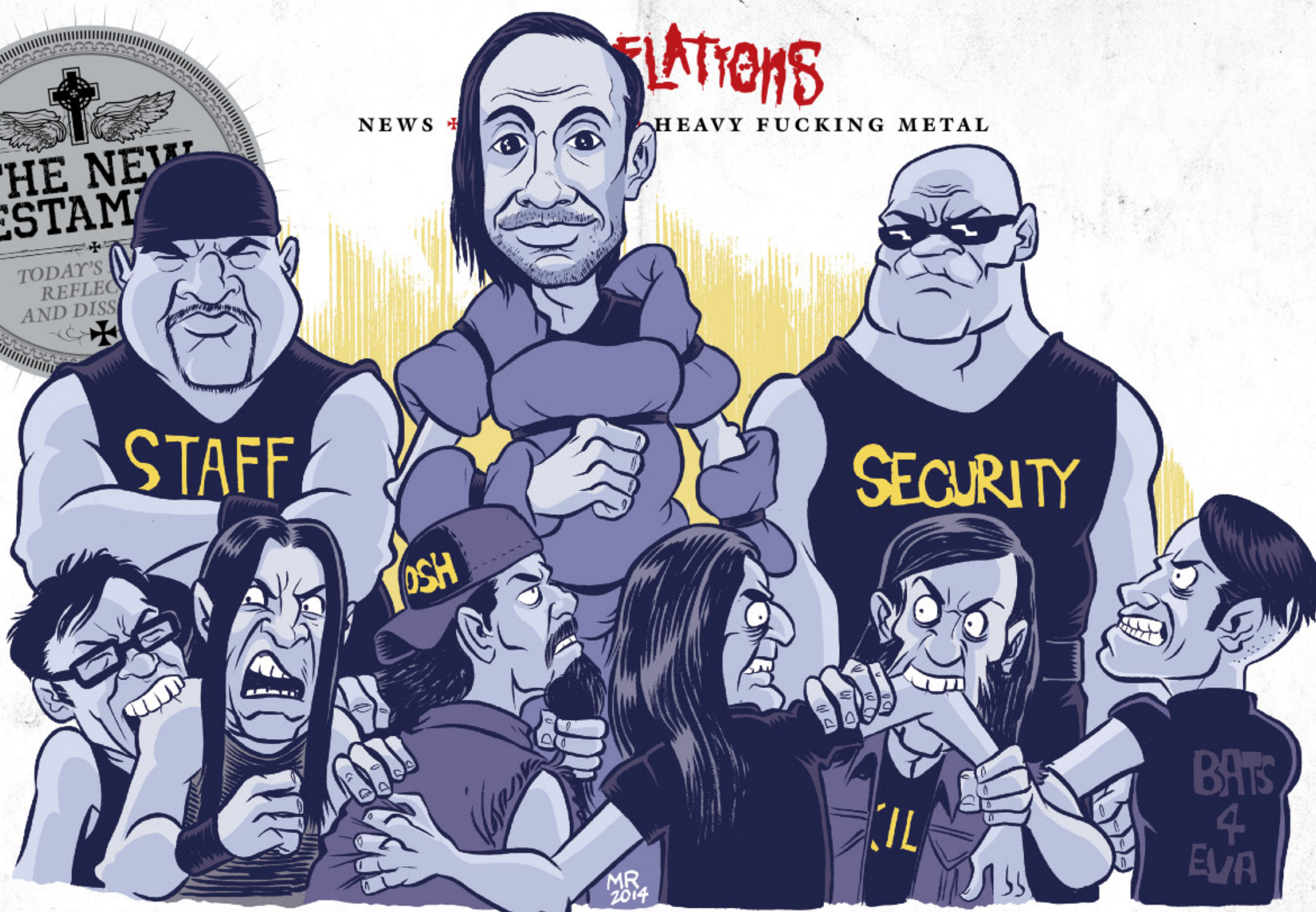
GOING TO HELL IS OUT NOW
VIA COOKING VINYL



NEWS

RELATIONS

HEAVY FUCKING METAL



Following Randy Blythe's trial and reports of fans getting injured at shows, crowd safety has never been more of an issue in the metal world. Cancer Bats' Liam Cormier explains why...

SAFETY COMES FIRST

In the last 10 years of being in Cancer Bats, I've broken my nose four times, received eight stitches in my forehead, chipped two teeth and had countless split lips, black eyes, bruises and cuts. All of this in the pursuit of good times and ripping shows. Luckily in all the years of stagedives, circle pits and mayhem, no one's been seriously injured (knock on wood). These days the issue of safety at shows has come up more and more. I do think that as a result of all these unfortunate incidences happening at shows, promoters and venue owners will increase security and try to keep things as safe as they can be, which is great to keep people safe and to make sure no one gets hurt. I think it just means if kids want that insane experience we all had going to shows, they will have to see bands in small venues and book shows of their own. DIY shows will always be around and they will always be crazy; kids will just have to keep their ears to the ground

if they want to be at the most insane shows.

One of the biggest problems in heavy music is that shows keep getting bigger and bigger. When I first started going to hardcore shows, they were in basements of people's houses, or a rented-out hall or church. There were little-to-no stages, tiny PAs and everyone losing their minds. The thing was, it was very controlled by the fact that it was so small. When you

"OUR BIGGEST PROBLEM IS THAT SHOWS KEEP GETTING BIGGER"

would see Hatebreed or Converge, it was a packed show but there were only 300 people packed into a small bar. You didn't need a barricade because the stage was only two feet tall. You could jump off the PA because it was only six feet off the ground. People would still get hurt, don't get me wrong... Kids would be moshing as hard as they can and going off, but the shows were only so big and things could only get out of control to a certain amount.

If things did get out of control, or someone was out of line, someone would let you know or people at the show would take care of it, because we were all in it together. I'm not saying it was perfect, there were still the occasional fights, but because of the size it was manageable. Now that shows have gotten bigger and bigger and we're trying to bring this same intensity from the basements to 1,000 people at

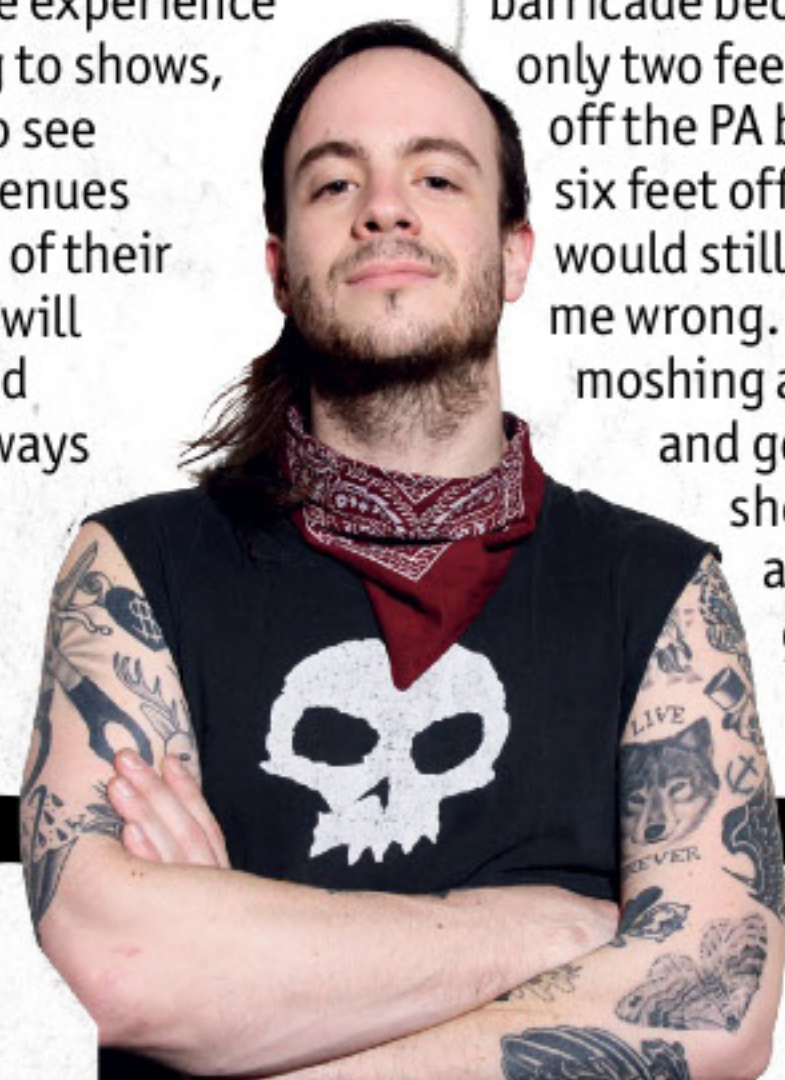
a club or 10,000 people at a festival, there's now a huge issue of safety. The stage is 10 feet in the air, the PA is gigantic and there's such a huge mix of people at the show.

I know, with Cancer Bats, I've had to learn the hard way that you can't be as crazy at these types of shows. I was stagediving constantly when we played Sonisphere Festival, not thinking of anything but having the best show ever. After our set I'm down at the front barricade talking with the kids, and a young guy comes

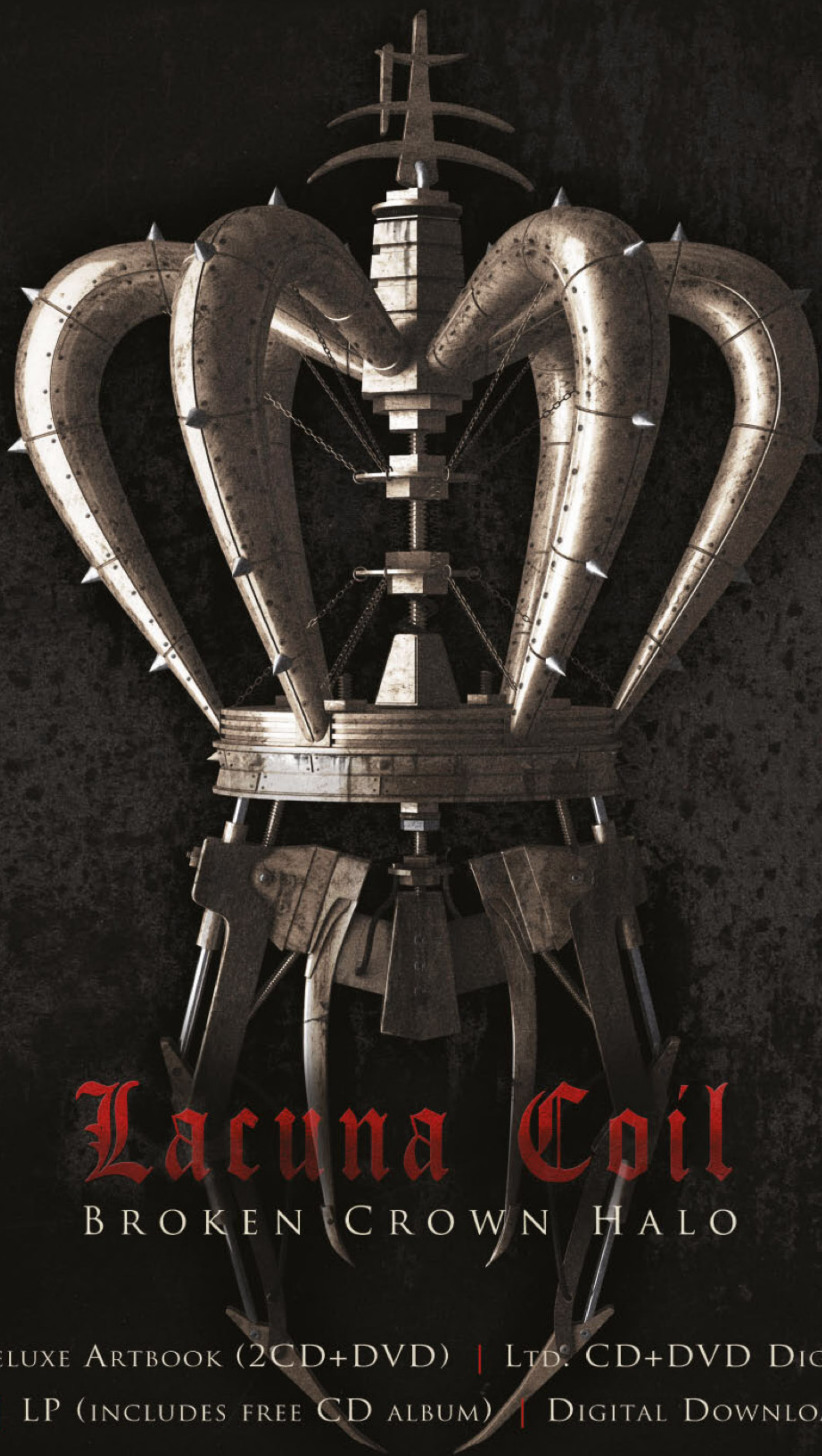
up to me and is missing a tooth. And that was because I landed on his face while stagediving. It hit me right there... that I could have really fucked this kid up and not only ruined his day, but maybe ruined the rest of his life. Luckily he was OK and stoked about the show (I ended up giving him the shirt off my back). Since then I've really tried to take personal steps to manage the crowd and to make sure everything is safe. Sure, when you play a small show you can let loose but in these bigger environments I really feel like it's up to the band to make sure that things don't get out of control and that our fans are as safe as we can hopefully make them.

I could talk about this forever – from yelling at security who are doing their jobs wrong and not giving enough of a shit, to moving barricades because it's actually more dangerous if not properly manned – because at the end of the day I want everyone to have the best time ever and for no one to go home in an ambulance. Fingers crossed. ✖

CANCER BATS' DEAD SET ON LIVING IS OUT NOW VIA HASSLE



WORDS: LIAM CORMIER
IMAGE: MARK RUDOLPH



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AN AUDIENCE WITH METAL'S VISIONARIES

MASTERCASS

JOEY TEMPEST / EUROPE

MATT JONES / THE TREATMENT

Europe's Joey Tempest has been flying the flag for rock since 1979 and is still going strong. The Treatment's Matt Jones hits the Hard Rock Cafe to chat with the legend.

MATT JONES: "You guys came through in that period of the 80s that we all romanticise about. Was it really that crazy?"
JOEY TEMPEST: "Oh yeah, it was a great time. I remember when we were signed, a guy at our label came and said he'd just signed this new band from New Jersey... it was Bon Jovi. And every week a new great band would come along. We had bands like Iron Maiden and Def Leppard and make no mistake, they really opened things up for bands like ourselves to be successful. The shows just kept getting bigger and bigger and we made sure that we put on a show for people. You know that changed a lot during the 90s but we're seeing it all come back now with bands like yourselves."

MATT: "You mentioned Bon Jovi – you and Jon were two of the big pin-ups of rock music at that time. How did you feel about that?"

JOEY: "Well the first and most important thing is to be able to play. I never took it too seriously because we were committed to our music before anything else. I think it was Jimmy Page who said it's 50% how you look and 50% how you sound, so we wanted to get the image right but it seemed like a lot of those bands coming out from LA at that time were only getting the first part right. They looked great and then you heard them and thought 'Oh dear! They need to get back to the rehearsal room.'"

MATT: "I take such great inspiration from the singers of your era, but who inspired you when you were starting out?"

JOEY: "Oh, so many! Phil Lynott I loved. He showed a different side to rock music. I rarely nod and wink, but he didn't take things too seriously and showed me that I could do that. I actually met him in a club after a show in Stockholm when I was about 19 and he was a real friendly, kind guy. Sometimes it's good to be intimidated by your heroes but on that occasion I wasn't as he was so charming."

MATT: "Have you ever managed to meet any of your other heroes?"

JOEY: "I have. We were fortunate enough to tour with Whitesnake and Def Leppard and I am such a fan of David Coverdale that I joked to him 'I have stolen so many stage moves from you over the years!' so he got me up onstage to sing *Still Of The Night* and I pulled out as many of his moves as I could. At the end he was really laughing and gave me a big thumbs up. That was a lot of fun. Also, when we were recording 1988's *Out Of This World*, Queen were recording next door and one day Freddie Mercury popped his head round the door and said (adopts camp English accent) 'Are you serious?! We're recording some classic music next door you know!' and off he went again. Ha ha! It was quite a sight."

MATT: "A lot of bands have covered your songs. Do you have a particular favourite?"

JOEY: "Well I'm not too keen on cover versions by hard rock bands just going through the same style and not putting a twist on it. That happens a lot. But there is a Swedish band called Hellsongs that cover *Rock The Night* in a way that is very jazzy and loungey but still quite alternative. They do a lot of covers of rock bands. I like them very much."

MATT: "Now I have to ask you about *The Final Countdown*. What's it like having one song that is so memorable and so much bigger than the rest of your back catalogue?"

JOEY: "Well we're very proud to have it in our repertoire and it's a good pension too! It was an interesting song. I got the keyboard, which was a brand new thing at the time, and started fooling around with it. I went 'Duh-duh-duh-duuuuh', thought 'that's cool!', and then put it away and forgot about it. Then when we came to write our third album we wanted to write a song that could open the show. We had been inspired by Eddie Van Halen using keyboards on *Jump* so we dug it out. The tempo is clearly inspired by Iron Maiden and the lyrics are really taken from my love of David Bowie and, you know, *Space Oddity*. And we still love to play it

to this day. We love that it has made such a connection with people and we certainly don't mind being remembered for that song."

MATT: "How has your approach to performing changed since those 80s days? Do you do anything different now?"

JOEY: "No, I don't think so. I was speaking to Robert Plant and he was a big inspiration as well, and I said a similar thing to him as I did to David Coverdale, about aping his stage moves. He said that we musicians are like a secret society that have our own codes and movements and we have to continue that legacy. I'm inspired by the bands of the 70s and you younger guys are inspired by us in turn. We all support each other and keep that code of rock'n'roll alive. That's what this music is all about and that's what connects, and what will always connect, with people."

MATT: "You, like me, have a very traditional approach to singing. What do you think of the screaming and grunts some bands do now?"

JOEY: "I think some bands that mix and match it do it very well. Sometimes to shout is the best way to communicate your message and bands like In Flames and Opeth have the singing and the screaming and it works great. When Mikael Åkerfeldt sings he has a beautiful voice too."

MATT: "So why do people look back at the 80s with such fondness?"

JOEY: "I think because of the great bands, definitely, but also there were great producers and recording techniques were improving. It was still analogue, so it was warm, but we really started to get great sound on those records. Look at an album like *Back In Black*. It started the blueprint for bands to follow and when MTV came along we were all turned into global megastars."

EUROPE TOUR THE UK WITH FOREIGNER THROUGH APRIL AND HEADLINE STEELHOUSE FESTIVAL IN JULY. THE TREATMENT PLAY DOWNLOAD IN JUNE

WORDS: STEPHEN HILL
 PICS: KEVIN NIXON



"DAVID
COVERDALE
INVITED ME
ONSTAGE.
I PULLED OUT AS
MANY OF HIS
MOVES AS I
COULD!"

JOEY TEMPEST

JEFF BECK

JIMMY PAGE
LED ZEPPELIN

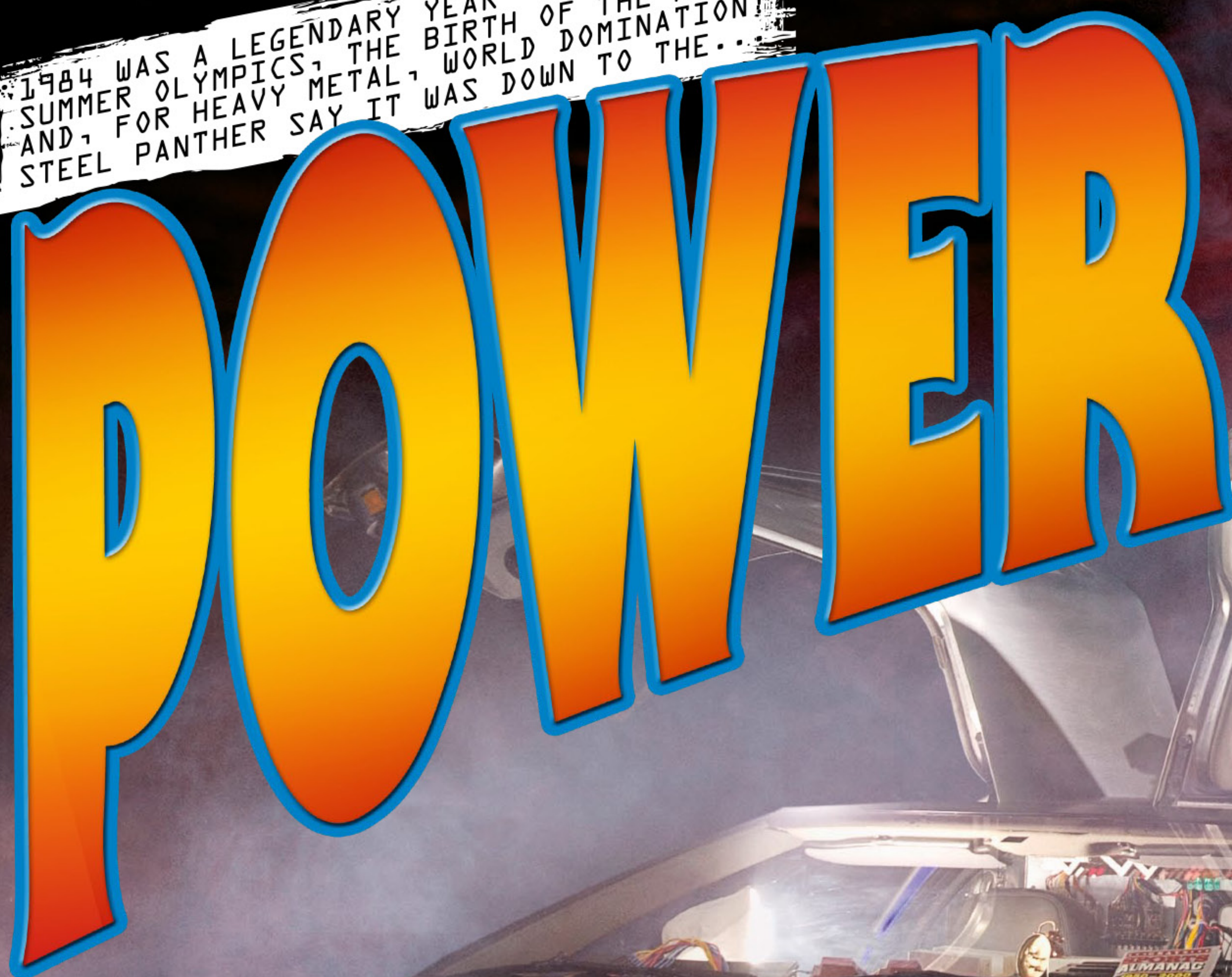
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BILL WYMAN
ROLLING STONES

1984 WAS A LEGENDARY YEAR - THE US SUMMER OLYMPICS, THE BIRTH OF THE MAC AND, FOR HEAVY METAL, WORLD DOMINATION STEEL PANTHER SAY IT WAS DOWN TO THE...

1984 WAS A LEGENDARY YEAR OF THE BIRTH OF THE
SUMMER OLYMPICS, THE WORLD DOMINATION!
AND, FOR HEAVY METAL, IT WAS DOWN TO THE...
STEEL PANTHER SAY IT

POWER



Where Steel Panther
are going, they don't
need roads

WORDS: DOM LAWSON. PICS: JOHN McMURTRIE

OF LOVE



"WHAT I LOVE ABOUT
1984 WAS THE FUN ASPECT,
THE PARTY VIBE!"

MICHAEL STARR HAS BEEN LIVING IT UP FOR THREE DECADES, BLESS HIM

1984

THE YEAR METAL CHANGED FOREVER!

Michael Starr and Stix Zadinia realise they need to go past 69



When, waaay back in 1949, George Orwell made his grim predictions about how the world would be in 1984, he almost certainly didn't consider the possibility that someone would have invented heavy metal. Not that the world wasn't a scary place in '84 – and if we weren't under constant surveillance by some mysterious Big Brother figure back then, there's a strong case to be made that we are now – but it was also alive with life-affirming heavy music, as some of the greatest bands our world has ever produced clicked into the highest gears of their careers and ushered in metal's most commercially explosive era.

From the US-conquering, chart-assailing triumphs of Maiden, Priest and Def Leppard and the ongoing rise and rise of Ozzy Osbourne through to the bombastic and preposterous emergence of huge-haired party metal on Los Angeles' Sunset Strip courtesy of Van Halen, Mötley Crüe and many more, 1984 was the year that heavy metal shrugged off its cult status and became a dominant force in global entertainment. And, as you will probably have guessed, Steel Panther were there and loving every deafening second of it.

"1984 was an amazing year because there were a lot of great bands that were just starting and a lot of bands were kicking ass!" proclaims Satchel. "Ozzy was in his prime. I'm pretty sure that at that point, that was the year that you

could understand Ozzy's speech better than in any other year. That made it pretty special. The band Ratt released their best record, too. A lot of people don't realise this but 1984 was the Year Of The Rat in the Chinese calendar and I think that gave Ratt even stronger powers. Because of that, they had sex with more girls than any other band that particular year. They weren't very good looking girls, but they still had sex with them and that still counts. In heavy metal it's not about quality, it's about quantity."

"For me, what I love about that era was the fun aspect of it, the party vibe," adds Michael Starr. "I never envisioned myself behind a desk in a cubicle. I envisioned myself at a party with some chicks. That's how I saw my life. And then when I got introduced to Van Halen and Mötley Crüe and all the others, that's what they were about. You'd go to a show, you see hot chicks and you see a killer band with a rippin' guitar player and a killer singer."



Michael Starr enjoys a few decades' worth of decadence

The modern age's principal standard bearers for what whining detractors tend to call 'hair metal' – as opposed to 'bald metal', presumably – Steel Panther have been bringing metal back in no uncertain terms for several years now. Their devotion to the fine arts of wearing Spandex, having great hair and generally kicking ass while being irresistible to the opposite sex (and while quite possibly being on drugs) is writ large across every note of their three albums to date. The latest one, *All You Can Eat*, amounts to a blatant and effusive celebration of the true essence of 1984, wherein the energy and euphoria of classic records from that year like, of course, Van Halen's aptly titled *1984* and Ratt's *Out Of The Cellar* is reborn with state-of-the-art

YEAR

STRIP SEARCH

TIME CIRCUITS

ALARM CLOCK

WHERE WAS THE PLACE TO PARTY IN 1984? LA'S SUNSET STRIP, BABY!

West Hollywood's Sunset Strip has been a den of debauchery since the 1920s. Alcohol was served in clandestine bars during prohibition and half the clubs were said to be owned by gangsters. By the 40s and 50s the place was alive with movie stars. It's not until the 60s, however, and the opening of the Whisky A-Go-Go and The Key Club that the place became of particular interest to metalheads, and it's been a mecca ever since. From the corner of Sunset and San Vicente you can see The Whisky, which has seen entire history of metal, from Hendrix to AC/DC, Metallica and Slayer. And that's not to mention all the 80s hair metal, when GN'R, Crüe and Poison ruled the roost. To your right is the Viper Room. It's tiny, but still has seen some of the best bands in the world. Keep going about a mile and you'll find the House Of Blues and the infamous hotel once known as the Riot House, where Lemmy wrote the lyrics to *Motörhead*. Look to your right, up past the legendary Roxy and you'll see the Rainbow Bar And Grill where he lives on a stool by the bar. He first went there in 1973 with Hawkwind and gleefully recalls tales of blowjobs under the tables and dubious substances in the bathroom. Sunset Strip is kind of like that.



Lexxi prepares to put his camcorder to good use

production values, barnstorming musicianship and lyrics that ring true across the ages (check out *Party Like Tomorrow Is The End Of The World* if you haven't already). In a sense, we really don't need a time machine to revisit 1984, because Steel Panther have never really left it and they still worship at the altar of EVH and DLR.

"It's *always* 1984, dude!" shrieks Michael. "It was a great year! Van Halen were kicking so much ass. They had so much success in their early years, they toured and did arenas and then they took time off to record *1984*, and when it came out it was different somehow. Eddie's guitar playing was a little bit different. The songs were still heavy metal, but they were radio-friendly heavy metal songs. It was just a great fuckin' record, and the videos that went along with that record really showcased, for me, what Steel Panther are all about. They're

fuckin' fun, they're funny, there's chicks in the video and it's all killer. You got David Lee Roth in the *Panama* video with the ghetto blaster by his ear, flying across the stage. That's fuckin' metal, dude! In the *Hot For Teacher* video, what does Alex Van Halen become? A gynaecologist! Everybody's a gynaecologist in a metal band like Steel Panther. But that really encapsulated the whole 80s for me. The Van Halen era really did it for me. They're like my grandparents and I really wanna be like they were."

"Throughout the year 1984, Michael didn't listen to any other band," Satchel states. "He was *only* listening to Van Halen. Of course, they were hugely influential on everybody and especially Michael. I loved Eddie Van Halen's guitar playing. When I first heard the title *1984* I thought maybe they were about to pay tribute

to George Orwell's book, but nobody reads in that band, dude! Come on! I guess the album was probably named after the number of vaginas that David Lee Roth had on his face the year before. He was getting more pussy than anybody at that point. They may even have got more pussy than Ratt and that's a big deal."

Don't be fooled into thinking that Steel Panther only care about metal bands born on the Sunset Strip, however. These guys are true students of metal and due to the fact that they're all old enough to have vivid memories of what was happening 30 years ago, their enthusiasm for celebrating every aspect of the era is infectious. As Michael and Satchel explain, they are even willing to concede that British bands like Maiden and

"IF YOU WANT HOT CHICKS TO COME TO YOUR SHOWS, DO SOME SIT-UPS!"

MICHAEL STARR EXPLAINS STEEL PANTHER'S STRINGENT EXERCISE REGIME

1984

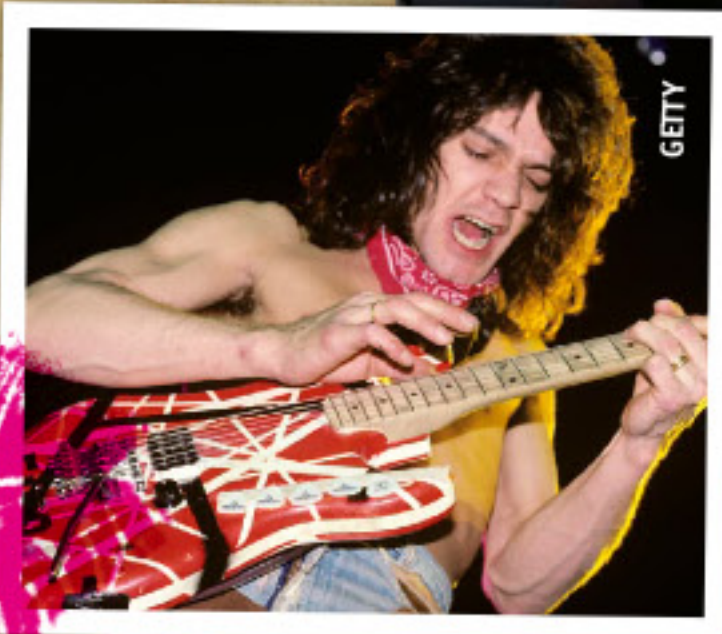
THE YEAR METAL CHANGED FOREVER!



A LOVE LETTER FROM SATCHEL TO EDDIE VAN HALEN

"First of all Eddie, I just want to say that I fucking love you. I'm not gonna suck your dick or anything like that, but that's just because you're not here. I know people tell you that you're Eddie Van Halen all the time, and I know that you know you are... although sometimes you probably get pretty high and forget who you are, but everybody is reminding you all the time, shouting 'Eddie! Eddie!' But you're badass. You wrote the *I'm The One* riff, which is awesome. Everyone says how bitching *Eruption* is, but I'm not even gonna mention that. I'm gonna mention *Spanish Fly* instead, and that's fucking bitchin'. Every solo on *Fair Warning*, dude, was totally radical. *Unchained* is obviously a killer song and then there's *So This Is Love*? You painted your guitar and it's iconic now, and how freaky is that? Bet you didn't

expect that, right? Not only that, but you got to fuck Valerie Bertinelli in her prime. You must have banged that chick so many times. Isn't it cool that you did that? I would bang Valerie Bertinelli now, just because you banged her back then and I would know that there might still be some remnants of your cock in there somehow. Isn't that weird? I'd fuck her just because you were in her vagina and I'd like to go to some of the places you've been."



"I'm Satchel. I'm your density. I mean, your destiny"



Steel Panther (left to right): Satchel, Michael Starr, Stix Zadinia, Lexxi Foxx. Ladies, please form an orderly line

"1984: NAMED AFTER HOW MANY VAGINAS DAVID LEE ROTH HAD ON HIS FACE"

SACHEL REVEALS THE TRUTH BEHIND VAN HALEN'S MAGNUM OPUS

Priest had just as important a part to play in the magic of 1984 as their own local heroes, even though – and it's hard not to concede that they have a point here – British bands tended to be considerably uglier and have worse hair than their American counterparts.

"Iron Maiden, dude! Just the fact that they were alive in '84 made the world a better place," says Satchel. "And Priest were on the *Defenders Of The Faith* record, and they were in their fuckin' prime at that point. They're one the greatest heavy metal bands of all time and they're still touring now. Glenn Tipton is like 87 years old and he's still rocking. Be honest, if you're not getting any pussy, you're not gonna play music. The guys in Iron Maiden would've stopped along ago if they weren't getting any pussy at all. It might not be the best looking pussy, but they're getting pussy."

"Those bands were definitely uglier and they didn't have the greatest hair but they still kicked ass and made great heavy metal records," adds Michael. "There was just maybe less pussy at their shows. For a guy, hair doesn't always last forever but it's OK. Look at Kiss – they didn't have hair the whole time. They started losing their hair so they put on extensions and wigs and kept on rocking. Same with David Lee Roth. If you want to get all the hot chicks to come to your shows, you've got to do some sit-ups, maybe work out a little bit, maybe not drink every single morning, and stay in shape and look good for the ladies. It's important. Maybe cut out beer and just drink vodka instead. That'll cut some weight off."

"Looking good is totally important, man," Satchel concludes. "Bon Jovi sold, like, 700million records with maybe two good songs, you know?"

greats of metal begin to slow down, retire or fade away, Steel Panther are just hitting their stride. If the fiery metal bombast of *All You Can Eat* doesn't instantly fill you with the celebratory spirit of 1984 then maybe you need to lighten up a little and remember that metal is supposed to make you happy. And, with any luck, make it an awful lot easier for you to get laid. Either way, we should all be thankful that Steel Panther's time machine is still working and ensuring that they can keep bringing metal back, albeit with occasional trips to the STD clinic factored into their time-travelling itinerary.

"The time is right now and that's why we're doing what we're doing," Michael declares. "Everything is still killer. The quality of vaginas is way better now and the technology for breast implants has really improved, so some things are better, but it's all about perception. Someone will say, 'Oh, they're just a hair metal band, living off the 80s', but we're not. It's 2014 and we're a viable, live, in-your-face act that's happening right now. We have to teach the youth of the world the heavy metal way, otherwise we're gonna end up with another 30 Seconds To Mars. And no one wants that, right? It's time to have a fuckin' good time. Again." ✂

ALL YOU CAN EAT IS RELEASED ON APRIL 1 VIA KOBALT. STEEL PANTHER PLAY DOWNLOAD BEFORE HOSTING OUR GOLDEN GODS ON JUNE 16!

TURN OVER FOR MORE REASONS WHY 1984 RULED!



Thirty years have passed since the glory days that inspired Steel Panther to fly the flag for heavy metal at its most stupidly entertaining (and entertainingly stupid) and yet the music from that era is still as loved as it ever was and most of the bands that wrote those pages in the history books are, somewhat remarkably, still out there defending the faith and just about managing to squeeze into their Spandex pants. Fortunately, as the

1984

THE YEAR METAL CHANGED FOREVER!

Step inside the time machine and let *Hammer* take you back to the biggest albums, tours and events of the year!

Foreword by **Joe Elliott**

The great thing about the 80s was the fact that we could emulate our heroes like The Beatles, The Stones and Led Zeppelin. These days it's so hard for bands to reach those heights, but we were a bunch of working-class kids from Sheffield with a dream that went on to sell out 50,000-capacity stadiums in America. We had a whole team of people working for us who loved music, not the fucking bean counters that work for labels these days, and we made a shitload of money. The whole business made more money than God! Leppard were all about the music: us, Maiden, Ozzy... all great music. That's why people hold on to that time. It was the final days of actually being a proper rock star. You could sell millions of records, see the world and live out your fantasy in those days and, because of the way the music industry has changed, that doesn't happen any more. So that's why people miss it. It was a great time, no doubt about it."

Joe Elliott
DEF LEPPARD

THE LIVE SHOW...

MÖTLEY CRÜE

The Mötley Crüe of 1984 was unlike anything the world had ever seen. Mick Mars does his best to remember what he can...

WORDS: STEPHEN HILL

“Umm... err...?” Mick Mars’s brain has been searching for the answer to *Metal Hammer*’s question for some time. It shouldn’t have been a tough one. We simply said: “Mick, what are your memories of the year 1984?” Not too taxing for most people, although most people weren’t one of the most notorious and uncontrollable hellraisers on the planet at that particular time. As guitarist in Mötley Crüe, Mick Mars was. “Well,” he finally declares, a little tentatively. “There was quite a bit of drinking going on...”

After the band’s major label debut, *Shout At The Devil*, began shifting major units toward the end of ’83, Mötley Crüe were in the transitional period of going from

a bunch of glam-punk hoodrats that scrounged about in grotty LA clubs to bona fide rock gods in 1984.

“It was a good feeling,” says Mick. “We did the Monsters Of Rock tour. If you had that lineup today it would be insanity: us, Van Halen and AC/DC... I think people would lose their minds. It was the first time we had gone abroad to see all these other cultures, castles, history, different foods, different people, and we were getting to play with AC/DC every day. So it was a great time. I miss those days.”

Castles? Culture? Come on, Mick! This is not the Crüe of legend! We want to know the dirt, if you’ll excuse the pun, on the famous Mötley Crüe stories that happened back then. How accurate are they?

“Oh, they happened alright,” sighs Mick. “We were doing these

CRUE & LEP: NEIL ZLOZOWER / ATLASCONS.

LARRY MARANO / ATLASCONS.COM

THE 7th DATE OF HELL!



NAPALM DEATH'S BARNEY GREENWAY ON THE '84 GIG THAT CHANGED HIS LIFE.

It wasn't just the best gig of 1984 for future Napalm Death frontman Barney Greenway – it was one of the greatest heavy metal shows of all time. On Friday, June 1, the original black metal band, Venom, played their first ever UK gig at London's Hammersmith Odeon – billed as The 7th Date Of Hell.

"I was 15 years old when I saw that gig," Barney recalls. "And it was fucking amazing. At that point I'd seen Motörhead a few times. I was into punk – Discharge, GBH, The Exploited. But I'd never heard anything as savage as Venom. Their albums sounded pretty ramshackle, but they had this evil atmosphere. They were the most extreme band of that time. We can all look back now with irony, but in '84 I was deadly fucking serious about Venom, and I'm not ashamed to admit it.

"Seeing them live, it was just so brutal. And visually, it was stunning. There was loads of pyro, and the flame-pots were so fucking hot – even for me, 10 rows from the stage. The whole show was really intense. And people still talk about it now. There's no doubt about it: that was a legendary gig."

Mötley Crüe: having a bloody ball in 1984

"The drugs, the women, the alcohol... it was an insane time"

Mick Mars looks back fondly

festivals that started at 11 or 12 o'clock and we were usually the first band on. So we'd be getting up and starting drinking at five in the morning, which eased off a bit when it was just us, Van Halen and AC/DC. Thank the lord."

Most of those stories come from the infamous Ozzy Osbourne tour that year. If they're true, how did you even *survive* that tour?

"The Ozzy tour was the height of alcoholism," Mick replies. "He had this thing where he used to bite people; he was always playing pranks, shaving off someone's eyebrow, you know... So the other guys in my band copied him. They started biting people. I got bit on the arm and had to go to hospital for shots for human bites and the clap. We were crazy bastards. I was in my 30s, the other guys were in their teens or early 20s. I watched these guys go through the growing-up process. I still think they're teenagers! But they

would let off flare guns, take these big knives and cut mattresses in half, throw stuff out of hotel windows onto the most expensive car they could see – all kinds of mayhem. I'm not trying to make myself look good, but I wasn't so involved in that. Then there were the drugs, the women, the alcohol... it was an insane time."

Let's not forget that the reason Crüe were in this position was their music and their huge live shows. "We just wanted to up the ante," Mick says. "We'd seen the history of rock'n'roll unfold before our eyes: Elvis, The Beatles, The Stones, and it had always been something that shocked those people who are in the middle of society. When it came around, and we had people calling us Satanists and Devil-worshippers because of the fire and the pentagrams, we looked at the history of rock'n'roll and thought, 'Oh look, it's our turn.'"

So, 30 years later, and with memories hazy and mind blurred, why do people hold that period in such high esteem? "People look back fondly at almost every period," Mick says. "But I think, if you look back to then, we had a lot of good bands in metal, like Iron Maiden, Alice Cooper, Ozzy and ourselves, that were going completely over the top, outrageous and theatrical. People will never tire of that and that's why we've stayed relevant.

I mean, it takes a little dip when they have kids, but then the kids start coming and you've got a whole new generation of fans!"

Mick Mars: having the time of his life



Vince Neil struts at Madison Square Gardens, Jan 1984



Nikki, Vince and Mick livin' it up

1984

THE YEAR METAL CHANGED FOREVER!

Enjoy your fame, guys... it's only gonna get bigger



anti-war lyric inspired by Ernest Hemingway's novel.

The band chose to record the album in Ulrich's home country of Denmark, at Sweet Silence studio in Copenhagen, a facility co-owned by a young Danish producer, Flemming Rasmussen. Rainbow, one of Lars's favourite bands, had recorded their 1981 album *Difficult To Cure* at Sweet Silence, with Flemming working as engineer. Following in the footsteps of Rainbow was evidence that Metallica were thinking big, although their limited budget meant that they would sleep at the studio and record at night, when the rates were cheaper.

The band arrived at Sweet Silence in late February 1984 and the album was completed in just three weeks. According to Flemming, it was James and Lars who were "more or less in charge". But as Lars later explained, Cliff Burton played a key role in expanding the band's horizons on *Ride The Lightning*.

Cliff had a vast knowledge of music, from rock to classical. His influence made *Ride The Lightning*, in Lars's words, "A giant leap forward in terms of variety and musical ability."

Ride The Lightning was released on July 27, opening with *Fight Fire With Fire*: super-fast and super-heavy, it was an all-out assault on the senses that was on a totally different level to anything else that was around in 1984. However, the album was not a huge hit. It peaked at number 87 on the UK chart, and 100 in the US.

But the rise of Metallica was unstoppable. By the end of '84, they had switched to US major label Elektra, and changed management to Q-Prime, whose clients included Def Leppard.

Ride The Lightning made Metallica the biggest underground metal band in the world. Global domination was only a few years away. ✕

METALLICA HEADLINE SONISPHERE FESTIVAL IN JULY

"METALLICA ARE FUCKIN' EPIC, DUDE. WE GET MORE HOT CHICKS, THOUGH"
SATCHEL



Preparing to ride that lightning to the top...

THE ALBUM

METALLICA

RIDE THE LIGHTNING

1984 had many great albums, but one in particular would shape the future of metal like nothing else...

WORDS: PAUL ELLIOTT

Some of the great heavy metal albums of 1984 were in the classic tradition: Iron Maiden's *Powerslave*, Judas Priest's *Defenders Of The Faith* or Manowar's *Hail To England*. Others represented the new cutting edge of metal: the raw, speed-driven thrash of Celtic Frost's *Morbid Tales*, Voivod's *War And Pain* or Anthrax's *Fistful Of Metal*. Greatest of all was the album on which the old school and the new school were brought smashing together: Metallica's *Ride The Lightning*.

On the simplest level, it was the definitive thrash metal album of 1984. And yet, across the whole piece, there was a depth and a range to the music that marked Metallica as a classic metal band to rival Maiden, Priest and Black Sabbath before them.

At this early stage of the band's career, they were working at a frantic pace. When they began



pooling material for *Ride The Lightning* in late 1983, they were still gigging heavily in support of their debut album *Kill 'Em All*. They had a couple of songs that had been co-written with their former guitarist/vocalist Dave Mustaine prior to his dismissal in April '83. One was the album's title track, a meditation on capital punishment via the electric chair; the other a lengthy, portentous instrumental, initially titled *When Hell Freezes Over* and subsequently

renamed *The Call Of Ktulu* after a story by American horror author HP Lovecraft, first published in 1928 (although Metallica simplified Lovecraft's original spelling of 'Cthulhu').

Mustaine's replacement, Kirk Hammett, hadn't contributed to the writing of *Kill 'Em All*, having joined the band just a month before that album was recorded. But for *Ride The Lightning* he co-wrote four songs, including *Creeping Death* (an epic of Biblical proportions, based on the legend of the Plague of the Death of the Firstborn, from the book of Exodus) and *Fade To Black*, the most ambitious and arguably the most significant song on the album. In addition, there were two tracks written by the trio of guitarist/vocalist James Hetfield, drummer Lars Ulrich and bassist Cliff Burton: *Fight Fire With Fire*, a flat-out thrasher, and *For Whom The Bell Tolls*, a slower track with an



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1984

THE YEAR METAL CHANGED FOREVER!

Eddie's incredible guitar-playing flew above the crowd

THE GUITAR GOD

EDDIE VAN HALEN



Following one of the most seminal albums in rock, Eddie Van Halen took his guitar pyrotechnics to the world's biggest stages.

WORDS: AMIT SHARMA

While Jimi Hendrix will forever be revered as the man who revolutionised the guitar, attacking his instrument in a way the world had never seen, it didn't take long after his death for a brand new guitar god to be crowned.

Born Edward Lodewijk van Halen in the Netherlands in 1955, Eddie started a band with his older brother Alex after their family relocated to California. They eventually came to the attention of Gene Simmons in 1976, impressing the fire-breathin', blood-spittin', money-makin' bassist so much that he offered to produce their demo, though not much came of it until the band were spotted by producer Ted Templeton, who told Warner Bros to snap them up quickly.

The self-titled album that followed was an absolute tour de force of heavy rock, staking its

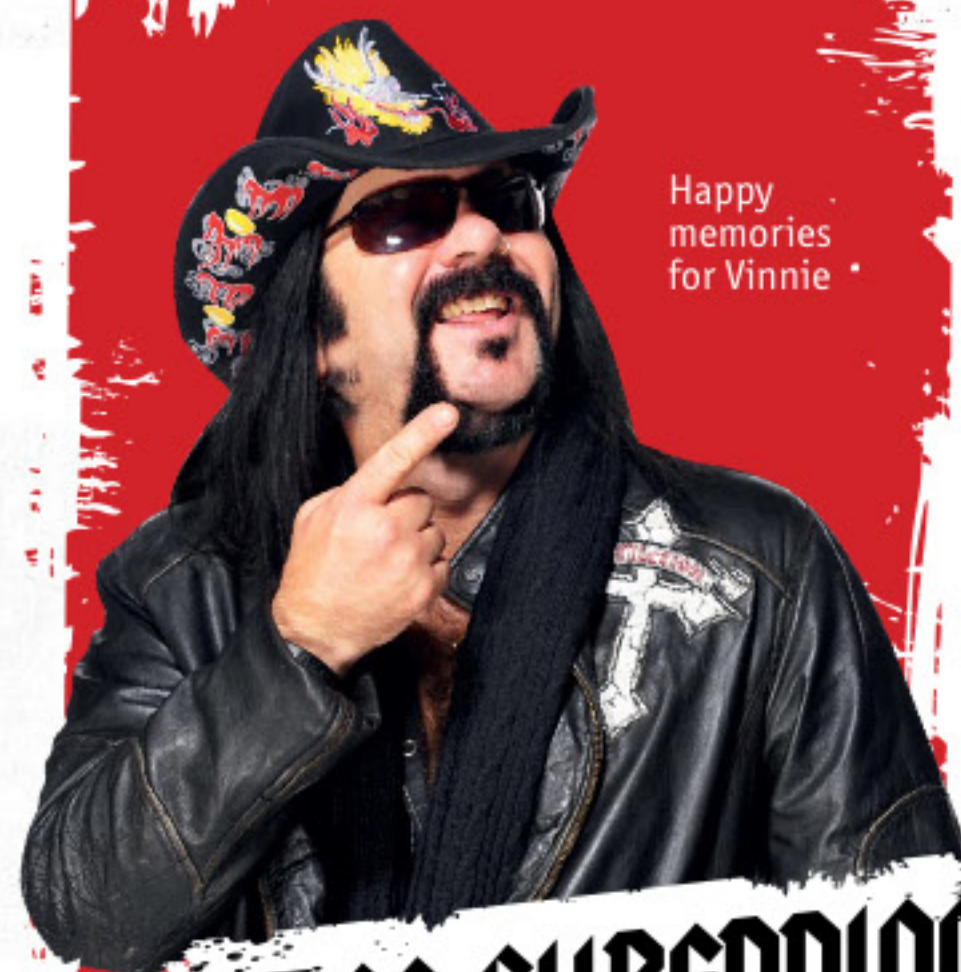


claim as one of the greatest debuts of all time... but one track stood out above all others. The one minute and 43 seconds that made up *Eruption* didn't just rewrite the rulebook for guitar, it catapulted it far beyond the reach of anyone else for years to come.

The two-handed tapping approach was his secret weapon. Eddie used to turn around in order to hide his tricks in the early days – it was something audiences had never seen or heard before. By Van

Halen's sixth record, *1984*, he was in a class of his own. The album peaked at second place in the Billboards, ironically just behind Michael Jackson's *Thriller*, to which Eddie had contributed that unforgettable *Beat It* solo (in one take, no less). Clocking in at just over 30 minutes and hot-rodged with anthems like *Jump*, *Panama* and *Hot For Teacher*, *1984* was the album that shot Van Halen to world-beating, stadium-bothering gods of rock'n'roll.

Fusing together influences from his heroes like Jimmy Page and Allan Holdsworth, Eddie Van Halen was in many ways the perfect package. Technically amazing, yet off-the-cuff enough to continually surprise people; it was Eddie's understanding of classical music and blues that moulded the blueprint for



Happy memories for Vinnie

THE ART OF SHREDDING

VINNIE PAUL TELLS US ABOUT HIS BROTHER DIME MEETING HIS IDOL.

“In 2004 I got a call saying Eddie wanted to meet me and Dime. I was like, ‘Dude, drop fucking everything!’ We go to this bar, he stands up and gives us a hug and we get to shooting the shit. So a few months later we asked Eddie to ask if we could get in to his gig; this was just a few months before my brother was taken from us. He sends out a private jet to pick up me and Dime and a limo to take us to the gig! We get there and they’re soundchecking, they invite us up onstage and I’m playing Alex’s kit. The gig was great, man. And then they send us back in the private jet. I remember being on that plane and Dime said to me, ‘Dude, I wouldn’t care if this goddamn plane went down right now!’ I said, ‘What are you saying that for?’ He said, ‘Because I just met the guy that made me wanna pick up the guitar!’ That’s how much Van Halen meant to him.”

neoclassical guitar or, as it became known, baroque’n’roll.

In the decades since, his influence has not waned. Those harmonics on Machine Head’s biggest riffs? Eddie was doing ‘em in the 70s. Dimebag’s signature dive bombs? Eddie pioneered the technology that made this even possible. Devin Townsend’s intervallic, almost keyboard-like phrasing? All Eddie. With Animals As Leaders, Scale The Summit and countless other bands pushing the instrument to its furthest limits, this one true guitar god of ‘84 not only plays a key part in our history, but also our future.



Van Halen in 1984: yep, definitely the 80s

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TERRORIZER 8.5/10

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1984

THE YEAR METAL CHANGED FOREVER!

Maiden: not scared
of their Mummy

BAND OF THE YEAR

WORDS: DOM LAWSON

IRON MAIDEN

With not only one of the best albums of '84 but also one of the best live shows, Iron Maiden came and conquered all.

Untouchable, unstoppable and almost universally revered: Iron Maiden have been such an omnipresent force for greatness in the world of heavy metal over the last three-and-a-half decades that it's increasingly hard to remember a time when their supremacy was anything less than nailed-on. But every band has their, to quote the opening track from Maiden's fifth studio album, "do or die" moment, and the British legends' came

30 years ago as they made that step from burgeoning success to untold international glory.

It was already a huge year for metal and hard rock in 1984, with the likes of Def Leppard, Van Halen and Judas Priest all enjoying unprecedented levels of popularity and commercial success on both sides of the Atlantic, but few were willing to bet against Maiden overshadowing the lot of them. A year earlier, the band had toured the US as headliners for the first

time, selling out arenas and other big venues on the World Piece Tour, capitalising on the momentum gained from 1982's *The Number Of The Beast* and its follow-up, *Piece Of Mind*, a year later. Clearly this was a band on the fast-track to fame and fortune, and yet nothing is ever certain in music – let alone metal – and as 1984 dawned, Iron Maiden needed to deliver the best album of their careers and follow it up with the mother of all live shows.

Onstage during
their epic World
Slavery tour



After convening in Jersey to write the songs that would eventually become *Powerslave*, Maiden headed off to Compass Point Studios in the Bahamas to record their fifth album with long-time producer and talisman Martin Birch. With the classic Maiden lineup of Steve Harris, Bruce Dickinson, Dave Murray, Adrian Smith and Nicko McBrain now firmly in place, *Powerslave* was always destined to be great: but when it hit shops in September '84, even the loftiest expectations were blown out of the water.



The album's debut was preceded a month earlier by the release of *2 Minutes To Midnight* as a single – back in the days when singles were of huge importance. Six minutes of furious, turbo-charged metal, *2 Minutes...* was an instant Maiden classic and ensured that the buzz surrounding *Powerslave* was deafening by the time it landed on fans' turntables.

A firm indication of the supreme confidence that was driving Maiden at this point, Derek Riggs's peerless and dramatic artwork for *Powerslave* added an extra layer of excitement to the album's birth. The perennially powerful atmospheres and aesthetics of Ancient Egypt were brought vividly to life by Riggs's

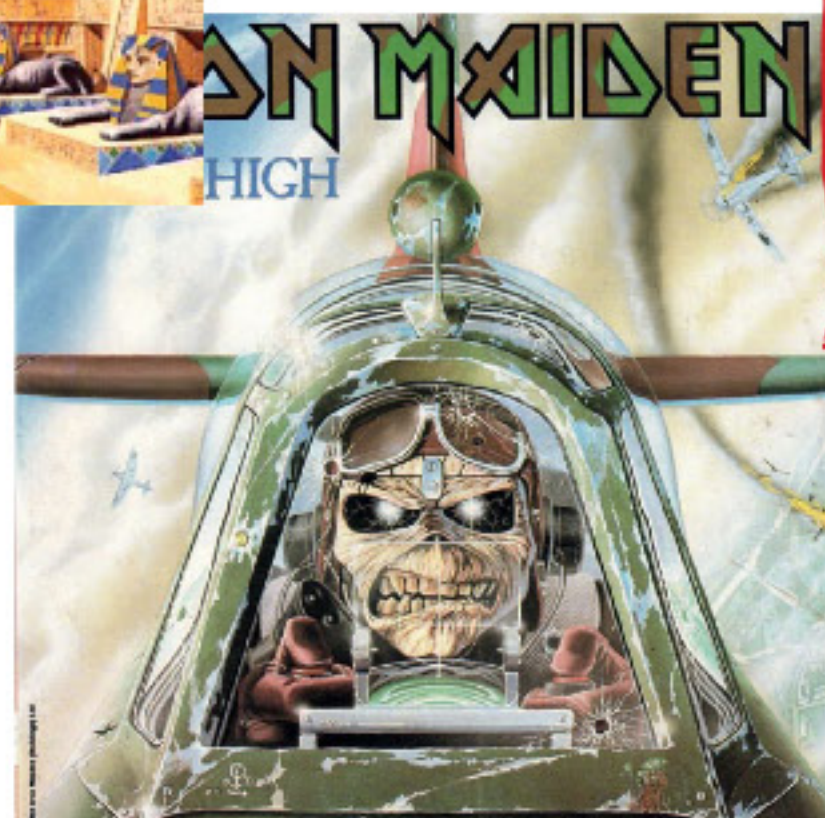
not for the immaculate musical contents contained within *Powerslave*'s grooves. Exploding into life with irresistibly frantic second single *Aces High*, Maiden's fifth album was (and remains) a masterclass in heavy metal at its most vital, energised and commanding. From thunderous instrumental *Losfer Words* (*Big 'Orra*) and the breakneck swashbuckling of *Flash Of The Blade* through to *The Duellists*' intense melodic bravado and the clattering sprint of *Back In The Village*, *Powerslave* had everything: massive tunes, breathless aggression, razor-sharp lyrics and individual performances that thrummed with infectious cockiness. Ending with two of Maiden's greatest ever songs – the

arcane pyramid pomp of the title track and that extraordinary 13-minute reimagining of Samuel Taylor's Coleridge's *Rime Of The Ancient Mariner* – *Powerslave* didn't so much trounce the competition as it batted all-comers idly away like gnats on an elephant's ballbag.

What followed, as every Maiden fan knows, was the all-conquering



skilled hand and imbued with a thrilling attention to detail and, of course, the menacing presence of Eddie, Maiden's mascot and spiritual guardian. The cover remains one of the greatest of all time, of course, but it seems unlikely that it would be so revered were it



World Slavery tour. Kicking off in Poland in August, before the album had even been released, Maiden raised their game to mindblowing levels, with one of the most spectacular live shows and stage sets ever conceived, replete with a 30-foot mummified Eddie. They would remain on the road for the next 11 months, performing 187 gigs and battling through unthinkable levels of fatigue and tourbus-related cabin fever, but by the end of that mammoth trek Iron Maiden were, unquestionably, the biggest heavy metal band on the planet. As they proved beyond doubt in 1984, they were also the best. ✠

IRON MAIDEN HEADLINE SONISPHERE IN JUNE



Eddie broke his shackles and ruled the world in 1984

"ONE OF THE GREATEST HEAVY METAL RECORDS OF ALL TIME. FUCK YEAH!"
SATCHEL

TECHNICAL ECSTASY

WE LOOK BACK ON THE 'CUTTING EDGE' TECHNOLOGY OF '84. BRACE YOURSELVES...



THE CONSOLE Atari 7800

In 1984 Atari were the daddies of home videogaming, so excitement was high when they announced their intention to release their 7800 console... unfortunately, due to legal problems, its release was shelved to 1986. The year the Sega Master System and original NES consoles arrived and stole its thunder. You snooze you lose, Atari!

THE WALKMAN WM-F15

Before 1984 if you wanted to listen to a cassette and a radio you'd need two separate devices. Then this little beauty came out and gave you the magic of tape as well as FM and AM radio. Can your iPod do that? Oh... yeah, it can. This came in three colours. All of them awful.

THE MOBILE Nokia's Mobira Talkman

How much does your phone weigh? A few ounces no doubt, you big wuss! Back in 1984, if you wanted a chinwag on the bus you'd have to cart around this 5kg monster. Luckily it came in a rather fetching leather bag, making you look like a distinguished gent as you wandered around frantically attempting to get a signal.

THE GAME Donkey Kong 3

By 1984 *Donkey Kong* was a well-established videogame franchise: to such an extent that its main hero, Mario, had gone solo. He was replaced by a guy called Stanley. Mario went on to be one of the most recognisable figures in gaming. Stanley didn't. The Blaze Bayley to Mario's Bruce Dickinson.

THE CADGET Seiko UC-2100 Wearable Computer

"What's that on your wrist? A watch? Ha! How are you meant to print anything out on that?" a person from 1984 would say to you (possibly). Well, they would if they were wearing this handy computer wristwatch. Owning one of them and the portable phone? You'd have some guns on you, that's for sure.

1984

THE YEAR METAL CHANGED FOREVER!

AC/DC
VAN HALEN
GLAY & OSBOURNE
GARY MOORE
Y&T



Mötley Crüe:
on fine form



Van Halen had
a grand day out

THE EVENT

MONSTERS OF ROCK

It was a legendary day no heavy metal fan could ever forget.

WORDS: PAUL ELLIOTT

In the 80s, Donington Park became a holy ground for British metal fans. It was home to the greatest festival on Earth: Monsters Of Rock, the first music festival exclusively dedicated to metal and hard rock, and from its inception in 1980 it featured the biggest names in the business. The headline acts from '80 to '83 were Rainbow, AC/DC, Status Quo and Whitesnake. And on August 18, '84, what Monsters Of Rock delivered was simply the greatest metal festival bill ever assembled in the UK, topped by three superstar acts: Van Halen, Ozzy Osbourne and AC/DC.

First onstage in blazing sunshine were America's new stars Mötley Crüe, dressed in their LA glam rock finery and playing songs from breakthrough album *Shout At The Devil*, ending with a bludgeoning cover of The Beatles' *Helter Skelter*.

Then came Accept, with Udo Dirkschneider prowling around like

a drill sergeant in his army fatigues. They opened with the proto-thrash of *Fast As A Shark* and finished with two of the most homoerotic metal songs of all time, *London Leatherboys* and *Balls To The Wall*.

Y&T were up next, playing choice cuts off new album *In Rock We Trust* – their highest-charting release to date.

Former Thin Lizzy star Gary Moore followed, throwing down the gauntlet for Eddie Van Halen and Angus Young with the mindblowing solo on hit ballad *Parisienne Walkways*.

Ozzy, of course, received a hero's welcome at Donington. After the tragic death of Randy Rhoads in '82, the Double-O had got back on track with another brilliant young guitarist, Jake E Lee, and a hit album in *Bark At The Moon*. Bare-chested and boozed-up, Ozzy had 80,000 people going nuts.

There was a strong buzz of anticipation among the crowd for

the arrival of Van Halen – it had been a four-year wait. And when they hit the Donington stage, blasting out *Unchained*, it was all too much for one female fan, who promptly fainted at the sight of sex-bomb singer David Lee Roth.

And to cap it all, there was AC/DC. Kicking off with Angus on a platform high above the stage, cranking out the riff to *Guns For Hire*, this was a masterclass in the art of headlining a rock festival, climaxing with *For Those About To Rock (We Salute You)*.

As AC/DC exited and fireworks lit up the sky, the chill of the late summer night had fans huddling around campfires as they drained their beers. Those 80,000 people had witnessed something magical. Never again would David Lee Roth appear on a British stage with Van Halen. And while it would remain a holy ground for metal fans, there would never be a day at Donington quite like that in 1984. ✖

Ozzy soaks up the love – and there was a lot of it

THE MOVIE



Ozzy Osbourne always claimed that when he first saw 1984's *This Is Spinal Tap* he thought it was a real documentary. Even allowing for his drug-induced mid-80s stupor, the Prince Of Darkness can be forgiven; the improvised parody is so richly observed and convincingly performed that these crazy scenes of life on the road with a failing English rock group seemed eerily familiar and utterly plausible in 1984, when rock was attaining the zenith of its bloated, decadent pomposity and lack of self-awareness. Filmmaker-performers Christopher Guest, Michael McKean, Harry Shearer and Rob Reiner studied seminal rock movies for maximum tonal authenticity, Harry even accompanying Saxon on tour to research his portrayal of Derek Smalls. The result was a classic mockumentary that tapped (ho ho) into the absurdities and clichés of the industry.

TAPPING INTO REALITY

FOUR TAP SCENES BASED ON REAL-LIFE ROCK INCIDENTS!

"HE DIED IN A BIZARRE GARDENING ACCIDENT"

Judas Priest believed Tap's list of dead drummers was based on their revolving-kit predicament, but the inspiration for Stumpy Joe (choked to death on vomit) was surely Zep's John Bonham.

"I WANT LARGE BREAD"

Nigel Tufnel's sulk recalls several petty riders, such as Van Halen insisting on bowls of M&Ms with the brown ones removed.

"SHE SHOULD BE MADE TO SMELL IT"

Tap's banned *Smell The Glove* sleeve echoed images of posed female humiliation like Witchfinder General's torture of a Page 3 girl.

"THE TRIPTYCHS ARE 20 FEET HIGH!"

Spinal Tap wrote their Stonehenge gag circa 1981, so it pre-dates an almost identical mishap that befell Black Sabbath in 1983. Tap's stones were tiny; Sabbath's were nine times larger than anticipated and couldn't fit inside venues.



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1984

THE YEAR METAL CHANGED FOREVER!



Wasp basked in the controversy of their debut

THE NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK



Bon Jovi: headed to the top and not budging

While Iron Maiden and Judas Priest were ruling the world, there was no shortage of talent emerging from the underground...

WORDS: CHRIS CHANTLER

SEPULTURA

In 1984, Max and Iggor were 15 and 14 respectively, living with their widowed mum in Brazilian industrial city Belo Horizonte. The Cavalera kids dropped out of school with few prospects and threw their energies into cranking out aggressive metal inspired by Slayer and Venom. They called themselves Sepultura after translating the Motörhead title *Dancing On Your Grave* into Portuguese.

DEATH

Beginning 1984 as Mantas, Chuck Schuldiner's pioneering splatter crew released five seminal live, rehearsal and demo tapes before Chuck changed their name to Death, whereupon the hungry teenagers released another five even more legendary tapes before the year was out.

CELTIC FROST

The day after Tom G Warrior disbanded

Hellhammer in 1984, Celtic Frost was spawned. The trio wasted no time in unleashing *Morbid Tales*, another phenomenal 1984 mini-album of profound historical importance.

CANDLEMASS

From the ashes of Swedish doom-lords Nemesis, Candlemass arrived with two epic demos featuring all-time classic doom material. Songwriter Leif Edling sang in their very early days, before giving up vocal duties to focus on the bass.

WASP

Wasp burst onto the rock scene with notorious debut single *Animal (Fuck Like A Beast)*, followed by a stellar eponymous LP and a spectacular world tour. 1984 was a triumphant breakthrough year.

BON JOVI

Although a crucial year for the extreme metal underground, rock's biggest newcomer of 1984 was a 21-year-old pretty-boy called John Francis Bongiovi Jr, whose debut album shot him to global megastardom, where he's stubbornly remained ever since.

PANTERA

Vinnie Paul best summarises those early years: "People look at those pictures of us and think we'll be embarrassed, but we were just emulating what was going on."

BATHORY

Debuting to surprise acclaim on 1984's *Scandinavian Metal Attack* compilation, Bathory birthed an LP of grim, primitive and cult underground satanic black-thrash, mastermind Quorthon pushing the envelope of extremity from a garage in Stockholm.

ANTHRAX

On their 1984 debut *Fistful Of Metal*, teenage dirtbags Anthrax sound like Judas Priest on speed, steroids and several six packs, but what the embryonic thrashers lacked in songcraft and originality they gained in youthful exuberance.

ARMORED SAINT

They were poised for greatness in '84: signing with Chrysalis, filming a *Mad Max*-themed video and recording a \$300,000 debut with Kiss's producer. Alas, world domination didn't follow.

THE VIDEOS

THE RECORDS WERE GREAT, THE LIVE SHOWS WERE UNFORGETTABLE... BUT VIDEOS RULED THE DAY!



Twisted Sister: not taking it, from the PMRC or anyone

1. TWISTED SISTER

WE'RE NOT GONNA TAKE IT

Could equally have been *I Wanna Rock*; both are classics with *Animal House*'s Mark Metcalf playing an authoritarian dealt his comeuppance by the New Yorkers' elemental rock power. This video's depiction of violence against the angry dad provided foundational impetus for US censorship busybodies the PMRC.

2. MOTÖRHEAD

KILLED BY DEATH

After a scene with parents admonishing their daughter's lycra clobber, Lemmy smashes through the wall and hauls the chick outta there. He's shot by police, electrocuted and buried, only to burst out of his grave astride his Harley!

3. LEE AARON

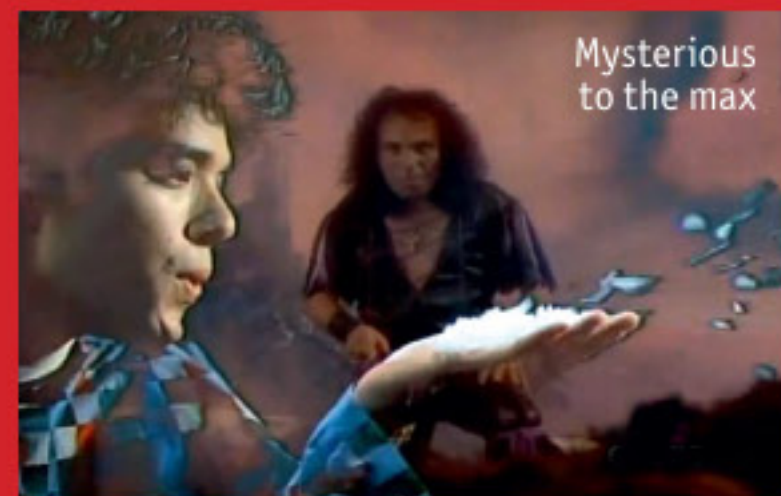
METAL QUEEN

From an alien landscape littered with tarantulas and skeletons, the loinclothed Metal Queen rises, sword in hand. She gets chained up by druids but a robot is on hand to set the villain on fire and break her chains with laser-beam eyes.

4. VAN HALEN

HOT FOR TEACHER

"Mom, you know I'm not like other guys, I'm nervous and my socks are too loose," intones the geeky Waldo before Dave Lee Roth drives him to school where his teacher is a stripping beauty queen. Ace.



Mysterious to the max

5. DIO

MYSTERY

Ballerinas gyrate around a fountain; Ronnie's up a mountain; a boy magician offers Ronnie a sword; Ronnie hacks through jungly tendrils; a teddy-bear-faced man turns into Dio's mascot and disappears; Ronnie rescues a woman with branches on her head. What's going on? 'It's always a mystery!'

"DEE SNIDER IS A TOTAL BADASS! I WANNA ROCK TOO!"
MICHAEL STARR

"BLACKIE HAD FIRE COMING OUT OF HIS BALLS, DUDE! THAT'S HEAVY METAL!"
SATCHEL

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THE RIFFS AND THE ETHICS.

SIMPLY PUT, THEY'RE TAKING IT UP
A NOTCH AND TAKING THE SCENE
WITH THEM"

ROCKSOUND

"THE UK JUST GOT A NEW
HEAVYWEIGHT CONTENDER"

KERRANG!



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AND SO IT CAME TO PASS
OUT NOW



AGELESS OBLIVION
PENTHOS
OUT NOW



MARTYR DEFILED
NO HOPE NO MORALITY
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MALEVOLENCE
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DEMORALISER
A LIVING NIGHTMARE
OUT NOW



INGESTED
REVERED BY NO ONE
FEARED BY ALL
OUT NOW

ROCK TO THE FUTURE

We've trawled through metal's past, but what of the road ahead? We ask our mystic metal panel what the future holds for rock music.

ILLUSTRATIONS: SIMON CADE

Which bands will be headlining festivals?

LZZY: "Metallica will have achieved Sabbath status, and will continue 'til the end. I'm saving a slot for that unknown underground band who're going to come out of nowhere and bring rock to its knees – they might be reading this now."

NERGAL: "I don't see any, really. I don't see Metallicas, Rolling Stones or Depeche Modes in today's scene!"

PHIL: "An alien cover band playing Of Mice & Men."

LUKE: "Holograms of famous dead musicians. We might have a shot."

TONY: "At The Gates – on their sixth reunion, Red Fang and whatever band Jada Pinkett Smith is playing in at the time."

ZOLTAN: "Avenged Sevenfold, Five Finger Death Punch and Volbeat. Then again, we could end up playing Thunderdome in the post-apocalyptic world of *Mad Max*."

"We could end up playing in a post-apocalyptic world of *Mad Max*"

Zoltan looks on the bright side



THE PANEL



ZILTOID THE OMNISCIENT



IHSAHN
EMPEROR



JESSE LEACH
KILLSWITCH ENGAGE



KOIE 'KEN' KENTA
CROSSFAITH



LZZY HALE
HALESTORM



NERGAL
BEHEMOTH



What invention would you like to see make it to light?

NERGAL: "I'd love to experience virtual sex when you actually feel, touch, etc."

KEN: "Flying cars would be the most kickass thing ever – like in *Back To The Future*! I want a flying Ferrari, that would be awesome."

ZOLTAN: "We are running out of resources so it's more like a necessity at this point to print

nutrition-optimised food. Also, it would be cool to have biosensors that can monitor your body, design meals and a health plan specifically for you so you are always running on optimal energy."

IHSAHN: "The Japanese will have installed solar panels around the moon."

LZZY: "Well, hopefully 'The Singularity' will have happened."

"Our kids will start Crossfaith 2!"

Ken reckons the kids will be alright

What will we all be wearing?

MATT: "Sizes and fits will change but in a rock band you need nothing more than denim and a cut-off t-shirt!"

NERGAL: "Black will always be fashionable. No matter what kind of clothing, as long as it's black."

PHIL: "Bio-mechanical armour."

LZZY: "Well, I'll still be in my leather jackets and high heels, but I'm predicting the kids will be into something resembling the 1930s just to spite us."

JESSE: "Eye patches, peg legs, puffy shirts and swords strapped to our thighs!"

KEN: "Nothing – clothes will be a thing of the past! Everything will be backwards – when you have sex with someone there will be a full body condom."

TONY: "White high-top Nikes that lace themselves up like in *Back To The Future*."

ZILTOID: "The skulls of my vanquished foes. And comfy 'sock-ettes'."

Where will your band be in 20 years?

TONY: "Still going strong but I will be involved in 27 side-projects."

JESSE: "Living a life of cursed infamous pirates on the high seas!"

LZZY: "As predicted by Pat Benatar, I will be sitting in my big house, sipping a glass of wine and revelling in the iconic state we will have accomplished."

SAM: "We will be chilling in our little houses by the sea probably thinking about getting the band back together."

KEN: "We will be ruling the universe, headlining festivals and kicking ass. We will all have families and kids and those kids will start a band called Crossfaith 2."

MATT: "In 10 years we'll still be around doing what we do, but 20 is a long time! We'll be older men but hopefully we'll still be doing what we love."

ZOLTAN: "Well, the way we're going, in wheelchairs probably."



PHIL MANANSALA
OF MICE & MEN



LUKE HOSKIN
PROTEST THE HERO



SAM CARTER
ARCHITECTS



TONY FORESTA
MUNICIPAL WASTE



MATT TUCK
BULLET FOR MY VALENTINE



ZOLTAN BATHORY
FIVE FINGER DEATH PUNCH

ROCK TO THE FUTURE

Will you have a personal robot?

JESSE: "We already do, they're called iPhones and iPads, but in 20 years we won't need them, we will just need swords and ships and treasure maps to smuggle booty and pillage."

IHSAHN: "Hopefully not, as we're sitting on our asses too much already."

MATT: "I'd want the robot from *Rocky IV* who could get you a beer and clean up after you. They

predicted this back in the 80s and we don't have it yet. Someone needs to invent this shit."

SAM: "Hell no! Have you seen *I, Robot*?"

KEN: "In Japan you can get a personal robot – they have robots now that will clean your house!"

LZZY: "Fuck yeah, as long as Skynet doesn't take over."

Will we have contacted aliens?

TONY: "Not only will we have contacted them but the All Star Alien Jam Band will be headlining Download 2034!"

JESSE: "We already have, they're called women."

LZZY: "I think we already have, but it will be more acceptable to believe such things."

IHSAHN: "I doubt it. If so, let's hope they resemble Spock."

LUKE: "We already have. Joe Satriani."

NERGAL: "Only God knows."

SAM: "If I'm honest, I think we've probably contacted them but the government just don't want to tell us."

KEN: "I hope so! It would be an awful big waste of space in the universe if we were the only intelligent beings. I really hope we do so they can give us all this cool technology."

PHIL: "Yes, I've already met aliens."

ZOLTAN: "I know a few personally, like Danny from Asking Alexandria or Herman Li – have you seen him play and abuse a guitar? That's not from Earth. Plus he travels around with his robot, Sam, who was built to extract the planet's entire alcohol stockpile."

MATT: "I don't think that shit is real. If it was the real deal we'd know by now with all the technology we have and how far we can see into the galaxy and all that bullshit. Why need aliens when you can have a hoverboard?"

"Alien cover bands will headline festivals"

Phil from OM&M gets extra-terrestrial



THE PANEL



ZILTOID THE OMNISCIENT



IHSAHN
EMPEROR



JESSE LEACH
KILLSWITCH ENGAGE



KOIE 'KEN' KENTA
CROSSFAITH



LZZY HALE
HALESTORM



NERGAL
BEHEMOTH

What genre will suddenly be cool again?

KEN: "Contemporary heavy metal jazz pop!"

TONY: "Thrash will become uncool again then have its third resurgence 20 years from now. An elderly Dave Mustaine and Municipal Waste – with no original members – will cash in on it hard."

IHSAHN: "Eighties metal. Again."

LUKE: "I hope original motion picture scores finally get their day in the sun."

SAM: "Disco will rear its head again. It's pretty popular right now so I can see it going and coming back."

JESSE: "Crunk but for pirates."

LZZY: "Kids are gonna be clean of tattoos and piercings and into opera with a modern twist because all the old farts are gonna be listening to metal and have tattoos and body mods."

ZILTOID: "The acidic formulas that have proved toxic to your species regurgitate at random, depending on the fiscal needs of your fashion elite. As soon as what makes young human males receive sexual contact of any sort becomes tied with a sound or look, expect fat, tired human males to sell it to you again with nary a trace of remorse or concern for what it represents to the infinite. So yeah... probably some sort of cross-genre bullshit."

How will this generation be remembered?

LZZY: "Being the last generation to truly appreciate having everything at our fingertips."

IHSAHN: "The superficial 'more me' generation that took everything for granted, until it was too late."

LUKE: "As a bunch of piddling, pencil-necked wieners. As is tradition."

PHIL: "Hulk Hogan, Ric Flair, Stone Cold Steve Austin, The Undertaker and The Rock."

ZOLTAN: "The Facebook generation. Or the one that played *Call Of Duty* and *Grand Theft Auto* really well while the real world fell apart outside their windows."

KEN: "As the party generation. We are going to rave it up until 2040!"

TONY: "I think it was a really good time for underground metal. People really started to really take notice of it in the past 10 years."

I hope we will be remembered for that and not the rap/rock thing."

NERGAL: "Chaotic but very inspiring and revolting. It's great times now."

JESSE: "It won't. People will only remember the day Blackbeard's ghost whispered in the ears of all freedom-loving men to take arms against the foes who have kept us as slaves all of these years!"

SAM: "I hope this generation will be remembered for the ones that stood up and took back our voices to make real changes in the world."

MATT: "Like every generation that came before it – unfashionable, uncool losers. We'll be the people talking about 'all this new rubbish' and how things aren't like they used to be."

ZILTOID: "As the one that realised far too late that money is a metaphor for fear."

"Disco will rear its head again"

Don't say Architects didn't warn you

Who will be voted King Of The Universe?

MATT: "James Hetfield. No question."

LZZY: "My little brother, Arejay."

TONY: "Lemmy. Duh!"

KEN: "Corey Taylor!"

JESSE: "Carrot Top."

IHSAHN: "Someone who won a reality show contest."

PHIL: "Shaq or Bill Clinton."

LUKE: "Michael Phelps."

NERGAL: "Kerry King."

ZOLTAN: "I thought it was Flash Gordon. Is there a job opening? Have weapons, will travel."

SAM: "Somebody that makes everybody change what they're doing and prolong our time on this planet."

ZILTOID: "The one who can figure out the key to my heart. Hopefully a woman with 15 anuses and the ability to know what I want to eat without asking."



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BULLET FOR MY VALENTINE



ZOLTAN BATHORY
FIVE FINGER DEATH PUNCH

MISAMAYI

WITH RISE OF THE LION, MISS MAY I LOOK SET TO BECOME WORLD-BEATERS. THE BATON'S IN FRONT OF THEM, SO IT'S TIME TO GET A GRIP.

WORDS: STEPHEN HILL



ROAR POWER



Miss May I (left to right):
Justin Aufdemkampe,
Ryan Neff, Levi Benton,
BJ Stead, Jerod Boyd

The torch of heavy metal. Forged from Midlands steel by Black Sabbath and proudly held

aloft during metal's formative years before it was wrestled from their grasp and keenly fought over during the halcyon 80s period by Priest, Maiden, 'Tallica, Megadeth, Slayer et al. Since then, though, only Pantera and Slipknot have grabbed it and had the strength and unflinching determination to not let it fumble or watch its light diminish. It's almost as if no one wants to take the responsibility. Trivium, Killswitch Engage, Bullet, Machine Head have all had it either tantalisingly just out of reach or been plain outright butterfingers in allowing it to slip from their grasp. Avenged Sevenfold think they've got their hands on it,

but on closer inspection that looks far more like the hard rock torch. So, c'mon guys, is anyone gonna hold this bloody thing or what?

"We would love it!" says Miss May I vocalist Levi Benton. "All those bands you mentioned are going to be gone one day. Someone has got to carry this on and take their spot. We don't want this music to disappear and that's why we've stayed true to it on this new record."

You'll have heard proclamations like this before from many bands, and so it's easy to let your cynical nature get the better of you. Yes, here's another young bunch of punk kids talking the talk before they can walk the walk. But with Miss May I here there

sound of modern metal? That's what *Rise Of The Lion* delivers with frightening ease. Any of Miss May I's previous 'core' elements have been ditched and replaced by pure, outright metallic riffery. It's the Bay Area, it's Gothenburg, it's denim and leather. It's heavy fucking metal and quite brilliant. If it's flag-in-the-ground time for the band, then consider this ramming it into the turf in emphatic style.

"Well, we want to tour with In Flames and Lamb Of God and those kinds of bands," says Ryan. "That's a big stepping stone for us. We had to write a record that was going to let us be able to do that. We've just been on tour with Trivium and, the old songs go over OK, but when we play the new songs, that's when we get the reaction we want. We would have struggled to have been on the tours that we want to be on with our old records. That's what this album represents for us."

Levi picks up, "The last record was such a transition of a record for us, so we had to make a record that made sense after that..." He then stalls and sighs a weary sigh.

Sounds like you put yourself under a lot of pressure. "Are you kidding me, dude?" yelps Ryan. "It was terrifying."

You can see why. Traditionally the fourth album is the one where a band can cement their place in the scene or vanish off the face of the Earth, so Miss May I's decision to make the album that, as Levi states "defines Miss May I" has clearly taken its toll on these young men. But, as we've said, it's not easy to get your hands on that torch.

"Fourth album is make or break," shrugs Ryan. "We've had such an upward trajectory in our career, we knew that if we blew it with this one

"WE WANT THAT TORCH: WE'RE REACHING OUT FOR IT RIGHT NOW!"

LEVI IS READY TO TAKE METAL TO NEW HEIGHTS

appears to be some substance to back it up. It could be the way that Levi and bassist Ryan Neff speak with such passion and confidence about their hopes for the future between mouthfuls of burrito during *Hammer's* time with them today, but even more compelling an argument is their fourth and latest album, *Rise Of The Lion*. A record that even the most hardened MMI fan wouldn't have been expecting. Reinvention? Not here. But a chiselling and refining of the

it could be the end. Alternatively, we knew that if this album hits then we could carry on up that road and be in touching distance of where we need to be. We felt like we'd made all the fans that we could've made from our first two records, so we wanted to reach out to those long-haired guys at the Trivium show that have been in the scene for decades... but we obviously want to keep the fans that have been with us from the start. It's..." he puffs his cheeks out again.



"It's fucking hard dude," says Levi.

When aiming for the stars, it makes sense to surround yourself with the best. Which is why Miss May I opted for legendary producer Terry Date, whose CV reads like an encyclopaedia of premium modern rock: Soundgarden, Pantera, White Zombie, Deftones, Soulfly, Ozzy, BMTH...

"Oh yeah," exclaims Levi. "Just about every record he's put his name to totally defines the genre that the album belongs to. I don't know how he does it because he's totally hands off and lets you just get on with it. We were looking at each other like, 'Wow! This is like the old days playing in a basement again!' It was great."

"He's just such a different person to us," Ryan adds. "This was not a third-party record. We came in prepared, much better than we have on previous albums, but he just needed to nod at us and we knew. It was crazy. You think 'This guy used these same techniques when he recorded Pantera.' When we were doing vocals he was telling us about how Chris Cornell used to record his vocals! You hear those stories and you think..." he pauses, wide eyed.

"We need to live up to that," adds Levi.

It's at this point that *Hammer* lays its cards on the table to the two young men. *Rise Of The Lion*, we tell them, does live up to its intentions. It may not alter the parameters of the genre, but, in 2014, you're unlikely to hear an album that encapsulates modern metal as well as this. So far Ryan and Levi have been polite and friendly, but slightly pensive and a little shy. When they hear this, grins break out on their faces, they both take a huge bite out of their Mexican delicacy and a weight is visibly lifted from their shoulders.

"Dude!" says Ryan. "We've been sitting on this album for so long. That is so good to hear. Thank you!"

Make no mistake, Miss May I care about what people think about them. They want you on board and they don't care who knows it.

"Those people who see us as young kids and write us off?" Levi says. "Yeah, that hurts. We



align with those bands, made them more determined to escape it.

"We've seen those bands on those tours," laughs Ryan. "They've played a handful of shows and everybody is freaking out about them. Couple of years later, where are they? Long gone. I don't like that element to music. We want to be in this for the long haul; metal fans don't care about trends. They know what's real. That's why we stayed true to this style."

"Look at a band like In Flames," adds Levi. "They came out when metal wasn't cool, but

"JUST ABOUT EVERY RECORD HE'S WORKED ON TOTALLY DEFINES THE GENRE IT BELONGS TO"

LEVI WAS THRILLED TO WORK WITH TERRY DATE

know we are the same as those people at those metal shows. So we want them to give us a chance. That's all we ask. If you don't like it, cool. But I know that one day they'll be at a festival, stood at the back, while we're playing and we'll make them come down the front. I believe we can do that. I want to do that."

"I want everybody in," Ryan states flatly. "I never used to think we could play arenas, I thought we were better suited to small clubs. But we have the material to do that now."

If Miss May I do seem hurt by a refusal to be accepted by metal's more militant fanbase, it may stem from their association, in some people's eyes, alongside bands with more 'scene' elements. However, stints on the Vans Warped Tour has, rather than making them

they're still here and, like, fuck! They are In Flames. Doesn't matter if it's them or Machine Head, Lamb Of God, Unearth, whoever. Those bands, those legends, have a name, they didn't change their sound, you just don't fuck with those bands. We want that."

Well the torch is lying there, unclaimed at present.

"It's a crazy thing to say when you think about it," Levi muses. "But we want that torch. We're reaching for it right now."

Don't expect the flame to extinguish any time soon. ✖

RISE OF THE LION IS OUT APRIL 29 VIA RISE. MISS MAY I PLAY DOWNLOAD IN JUNE

HEAVY METAL

MILESTONES

YEAR ...2010

MMI RELEASE MONUMENTS

The year is 2010 and Miss May I have just released their second album, *Monuments*, to commercial and critical acclaim. It is their first to enter the US Billboard top 100, also making the Top 10 in the in the Hard Rock Chart and Top 20 in the Indie Chart, leading to the band heading out onto the road with local scene heroes The Devil Wears Prada and their first ever headlining tour. This extensive groundwork leads to the band being offered a slot on the forthcoming Vans Warped Tour, the biggest shows of their career to date.

ALSO IN METAL...

Nergal goes to court on blasphemy charges... Tom Araya has back surgery... Mike Portnoy gets the boot from Avenged Sevenfold

GLOBAL NEWS

BEST-SELLING ALBUM

TAKE THAT *Progress*

BEST-SELLING SINGLE

EMINEM featuring Rihanna
Love The Way You Lie

BEST-SELLING MOVIE

Toy Story 3

RANDOM FACT

Volcanic ash erupting from Mount Eyjafjallajökull brings air traffic in Europe to a standstill

BORN

AMC's *The Walking Dead*
(we had to get creative here)

DIED

Peter Steele, Ronnie James Dio, Paul Gray



Two Unholy Sisters Join Forces To Create a METAL MONSTER!!



The stunning debut album from The Oath mixes classic HEAVY METAL with RAW attitude and 70's HARD ROCK spirit. Like a contemporary mix of early Angel Witch and Coven.



The Oath - Self-titled
RISECD/LP178



Admiral Sir Cloudesley Shovell



Admiral Sir Cloudesley Shovel
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April 2014
22nd Birmingham, O2 Academy 2
23rd Glasgow, G2
24th Manchester, Academy 3
25th London, Koko

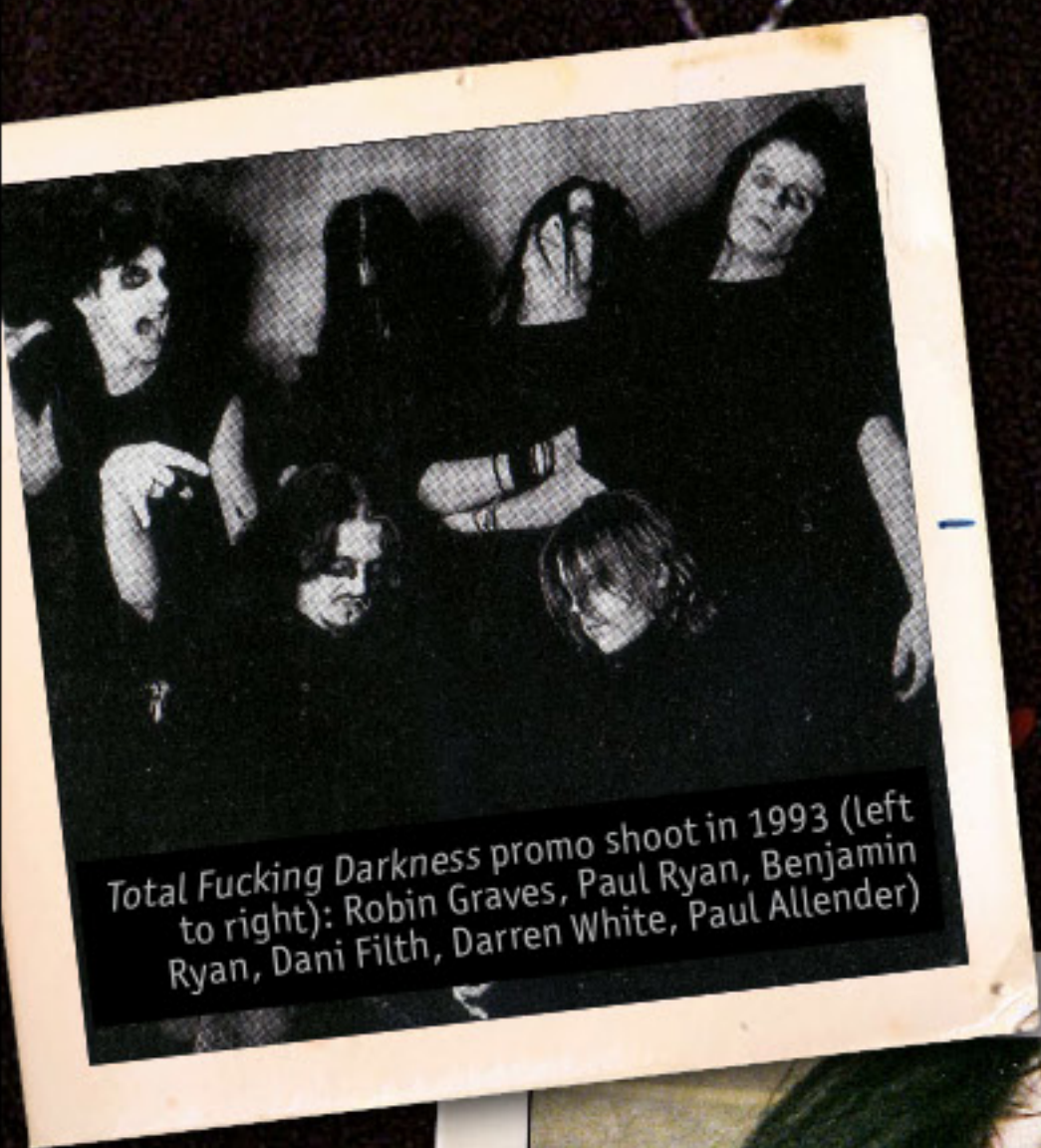


CRADLE OF FILTH

SONS OF

In the two decades since their inception, Cradle Of Filth have become one of the most successful UK metal bands of all time. Founding members Dani Filth and Paul Ryan rewind the clock to the early days...

WORDS: DAYAL PATTERSON



Total Fucking Darkness promo shoot in 1993 (left to right): Robin Graves, Paul Ryan, Benjamin Ryan, Dani Filth, Darren White, Paul Allender



Dani Filth, as COF support Cancer in Preston, 1993



Paul Ryan, Robin Graves and Dani Filth larking about in Robin's bedroom in Ipswich



SATAN

Cradle Of Filth in '94 (left to right):
Robin Eaglestone, Paul Ryan, Paul
Allender (bottom), Nick Barker,
Dani Filth, Benjamin Ryan



**"WE WORE CORSPREPAIN TO AN
INTERVIEW FOR A LOCAL PAPER.
THEY DIDN'T PRINT IT"**

LUCKILY THERE'S ALWAYS METAL HAMMER, DANI

"It was like a horror film, like *The Wicker Man* or something!" Paul Ryan, ex-Cradle Of Filth guitarist, shakes his head and laughs in disbelief as he recalls how the band were almost lynched by yokels before they could become the household name they are today. "We were in a churchyard at dusk, doing a photoshoot – in fact, it was for *Metal Hammer* – and we noticed that two fields away there were all these people from the village with dogs, which was a bit weird. And then someone was like, 'You know what? They're properly coming for us!' We had to grab the stuff, chuck it in the car, with all the boots and make-up, and drive off in my Ford Escort..." "...going about 10 miles an hour!" interjects the one and only Dani Filth with a laugh.

"We got out by the skin of our teeth," continues Paul. "What really amazed me was that they were so ignorant they didn't think the cars coming from the cemetery could be anything to do with the whole thing. So we drove straight past, and that's why I say it was like *The Wicker Man*, because they were like..." Paul drops his jaw and adopts a zombie-like stare into middle distance: "Must go to the cemetery, must cast out the witches!" For Paul and Dani, this is clearly a time for indulging in a little nostalgia. And who can blame them? Having formed the band together in 1991 – and having had very little contact for the last 16 years – the two are once more working together, this time to bring to light some of the band's very earliest recordings, most notably 1993's *Total Fucking Darkness* demo. It's a decision that has had them hunting for lost rehearsal tapes, digging out old artwork and generally looking back at those formative years. "We have the whole of *Total Fucking Darkness*," explains Dani of the forthcoming release. "A rehearsal, some keyboard pieces, and *Splattered In Faeces* and *Devil Mayfair* from the deleted *Goetia* album. That would've been our debut album, but the label that was supposed to be funding it refused to pay the studio, and tape was expensive back then so they wiped it. Only those two tracks survived." Losing the album they had sweated over, COF had with two options – accept the blow and give up, or create something new and keep the momentum. They chose the latter and crafted the *Total Fucking Darkness* tape, and in doing so made

CRADLE OF FILTH

ALUMNI OF FILTH

MORE THAN 37 MUSICIANS HAVE PASSED THROUGH COF'S DOORS OVER THE YEARS. WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

DAMIEN GREGORI

Remarkably, Damien Gregori – born Greg Moffitt – actually got the role of keyboard player in Cradle Of Filth after answering an advert in *Metal Hammer*. It was a role he filled on both *Vempire* and *Dusk... And Her Embrace*, after which he left to make a name for himself as a music journalist, not least within these very pages!

NICK BARKER

Originally a member of death/thrashers Monolith, Nick 'bullied his way' (Dani's words) into Cradle of Filth in 1992, then stuck around for another seven years before leaving to work in an astonishing number of bands including Dimmu Borgir, Lock Up, Benediction, Gorgoroth, Brujeria, Leaves' Eyes, Borknagar, Anaal Nathrakh, Old Man's Child and currently Ancient and Twilight Of The Gods.

GIAN PYRES

Originally a member of legendary doomsters Solstice, Gian entered COF in time to play on 1996's *Dusk...* and stayed until 2002. Since then he's played with a fair few respected bands including Extreme Noise Terror, Dragonlord and Gorerotted/The Rotted. He's also worked as a games developer on a number of games including *Rome: Total War*.

ADRIAN ERLANDSSON

Swedish-born Adrian had already made his name in melodic death metal legends At The Gates and The Haunted by the time he joined COF, and has also played in a plethora of groups since leaving, including Paradise Lost, Vallenfyre and Nemhain, the latter featuring his wife on vocals.

SARAH JEZEBEL DEVA

Though not a full-time member of the band, Sarah has provided regular vocals for Cradle Of Filth since the mid-90s. When she's not been busy with COF or recording her own solo work, Sarah has lent her vocal talents to a wealth of groups including Therion, The Gathering, Mortiis, The Kovenant and Hecate Enthroned (an interesting choice since the band were briefly considered a challenge to COF around the time the band first blew up).



Robin Graves, Dani Filth and Paul Allender in the back of their old tour van while supporting Emperor in 1993



Paul Allender: razor-blade smile

a shift from death metal to second wave black metal. At the time, death metal was at

its peak, with bands like

Morbid Angel and Carcass shifting serious numbers of units, whereas black metal was an unknown and fiercely underground movement.

"People had heard of the black metal thing but it was still regarded with suspicion," explains Dani. "I remember we went to a paper, *The Colchester Gazette* I think, in full corpsepaint for an interview, and they wouldn't print it as they felt it was too controversial."

"If we did that now, they'd say, 'You guys look like berks, get out!'" laughs Paul. "They'd be like, 'What are these clowns about, there's a traffic cone knocked over, we have to go and report on that.' They *wouldn't* be going, 'Oh, there's a load of Satanic black metal people in the building!' It was easy to wind people up."

Of course, just a few hundred miles north in Norway, black metal was doing more than merely winding up the public, it was *terrorizing* them. Churches were ablaze, graveyards were being desecrated and that very year COF accompanied Norway's Emperor for their first UK tour, during which drummer Faust admitted to Dani that he had murdered a stranger the year before. The panic in the Norwegian media soon spread to the UK, with even the BBC discussing calls to ban the genre, after Kent-based COF fan Paul Timms and his associates were sentenced for causing £100,000 of damages to cemeteries.

"There was the Timms thing yes," recalls Dani. "And I remember when [a female industry figure] moved out to our little village and stole a gravestone from a famous cemetery and put it in her bedroom."

"But basically there was a spate of general vandalism at the time," argues Paul, "by mostly ignorant people, and that was blamed on people with a supposed ulterior motive."

"We used to drink in graveyards, didn't we?"

"Yeah. I remember there was this massive cemetery, and a friend told us that if you ran around it 13 times you'd invoke a demonic spirit. We were pissed up and it was Halloween, so we did 13 laps and ended up absolutely knackered. Funnily enough, nothing happened. So we were huffing and puffing saying, 'Ooh, I can't feel anything, can you?' There was a lot of youth involved, people getting up to youthful things that people would normally blame on people's ages, but because of the hysteria they thought there must be this organised Satanic group!"

"But we are talking about the back waters of Suffolk," considers Dani. "Where we grew up, near Sudbury, Hadleigh, people were thick as thieves and they worried about anything untoward. And it was a bit untoward to be fair!"

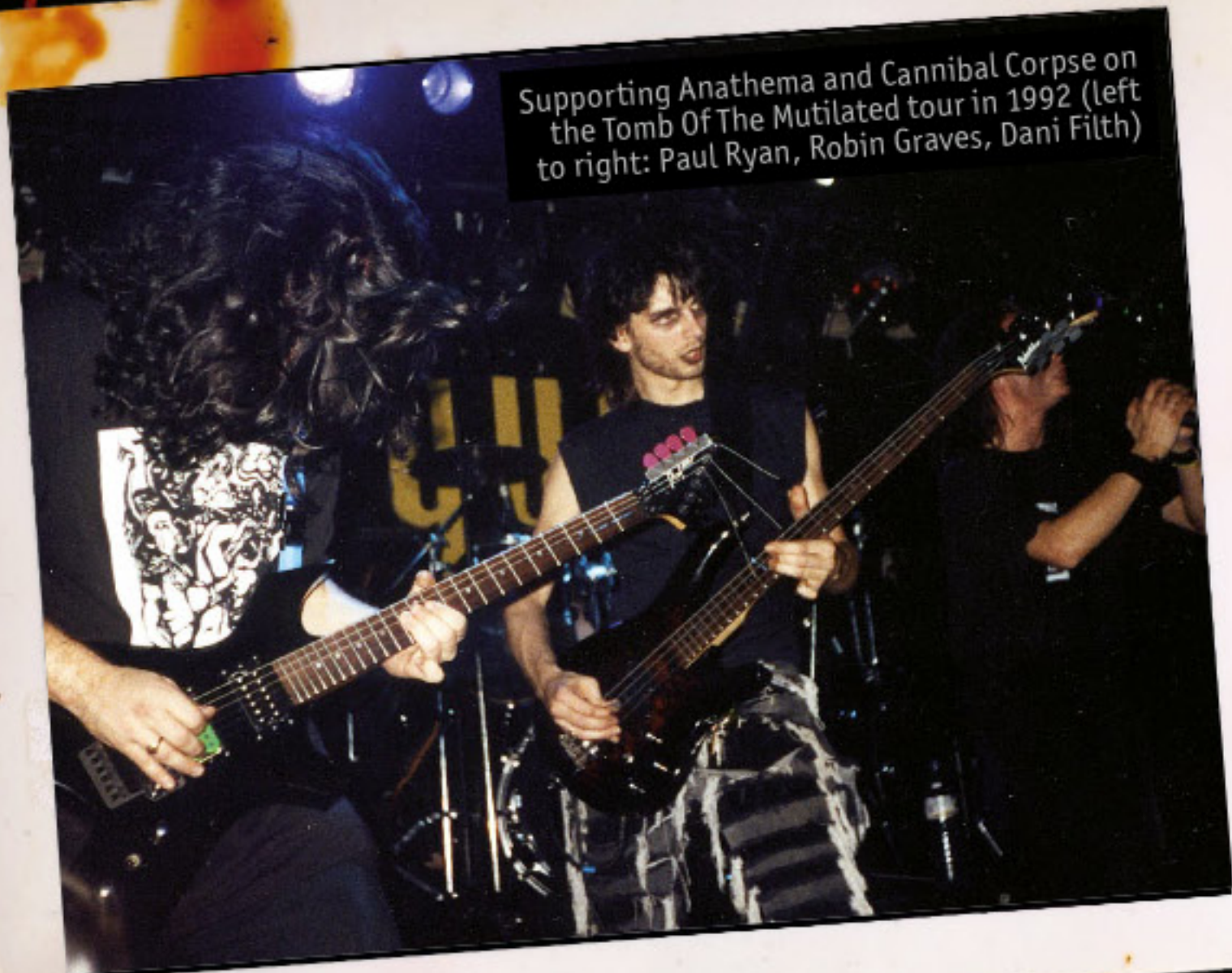
"We were influenced by the occult and dark materials; it's not like we didn't take that seriously, we absolutely did," confirms Paul. "But the crossover into Satanic terrorism, that was never something that was in our minds."

There's no doubt that COF's shared interest in the dark side had evolved into something more explicitly occult and Satanic by the time of *TFD* and debut album *The Principle Of Evil Made Flesh*, and that this was partly due to outside influences. There was, for example, the band's self-styled 'Satanic advisor', Andrea Meyer, a German-born artist who provided fetish performances and female vocals for the group. Perhaps even more important was the legendary Frater Nihil – another individual heavily involved in the occult – who signed the band to Cacophonous Records, and is today releasing the aforementioned rerelease on his respected Mordgrimm label.

**"WE RAN AROUND A GRAVEYARD
13 TIMES TO INVOKE A DEMONIC
SPIRIT. WE JUST GOT KNACKERED"**

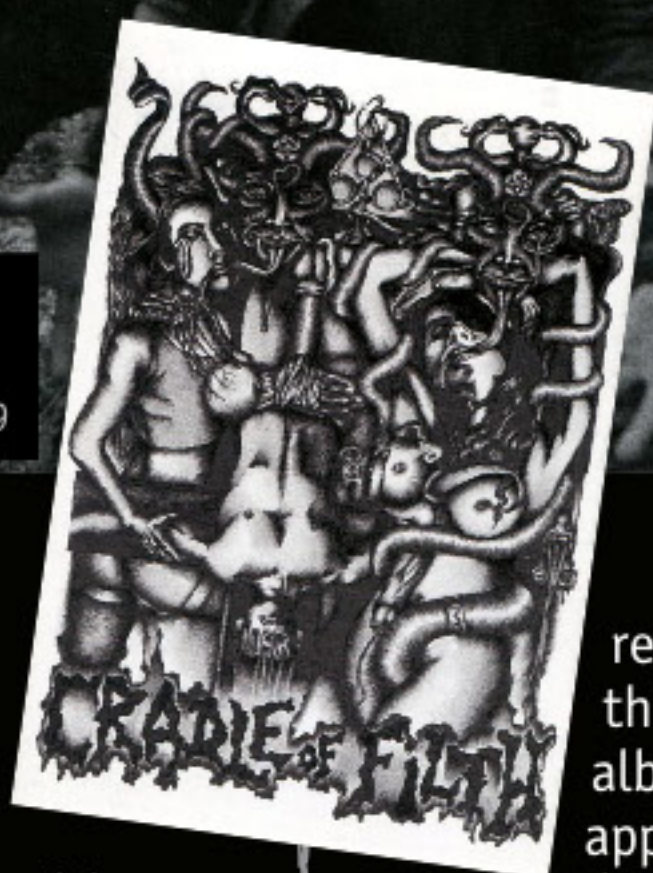
COF were always on the lookout for inspiration

Supporting Anathema and Cannibal Corpse on the Tomb Of The Mutilated tour in 1992 (left to right: Paul Ryan, Robin Graves, Dani Filth)





Dani Filth, Paul Allender, Paul Ryan, Benjamin Ryan, Robin Graves and Was Sarginson (one of the few photos taken of this drummer), in the woods in Ipswich, 1999



"He was actually a catalyst for the band," explains Dani, "because we were originally supposed to do a single, which we actually went and recorded with our old drummer [William 'Was' Sarginson], with Nick Barker coming down to produce it. Was just bottled it, he was really hungover and Nick was looming behind him and he couldn't play, so that was cancelled and then we did the *Principle...* album for Cacophonous and Nick kind of bullied his way into the band."

Paul ponders their early sound: "The first and second COF demos were predominately influenced by bands like Deicide, Entombed and Obituary. We were firmly into that, but that's because a lot of black metal bands hadn't evolved into black metal yet, so the influence wasn't there to have. A lot of it was dictated by records we got in tape-trading."

"I recall playing the Day Of Death festival," recalls Dani, "then being dropped off at my Nan's in London to work in a flower shop, which I did every Xmas to earn some money. That day I went to Cacophonous and Nihil gave me *Ugra Karma* by Impaled Nazarene and *Pure Holocaust* by Immortal. Then there was Emperor's split EP with Enslaved. We suddenly found we belonged to something because we were right there in the thick of things and it was exciting and everything we wanted it to be. We were into Swedish death metal, we were into this British goth-doom stuff like Paradise Lost, Anathema and Decomposed and first-wave stuff like Slayer and Venom, and then when the second wave of black metal exploded it felt like, 'This is our niche!' I remember thinking, 'We could be prime movers here, this thing could be something big, because nobody else has done this before, we have a good idea and we're all really into it.'"

That premonition soon became reality, with sales of *Principle...* in the five-figure region and second album *Dusk... And Her Embrace* apparently selling almost 50 times that, outselling most 'mainstream' metal bands. But Paul and Dani's paths would sadly divide just as this happened, with Paul, his brother keyboardist Ben Ryan, and guitarist Paul Allender leaving to form The Blood Divine. Since then, Paul has forged a highly successful career as a booking agent for the world's biggest metal bands, while Dani has of course continued to front the ever-popular Cradle. But is there anything, looking back at those pre-success days, that the guys miss?

"Yeah," Dani replies instantly. "All of it." There's a pause, and for just a few moments all the laughter and joviality is dispelled by the vocalist's candidness. "That was me back then, before the weight of the world *crushed my spirit*," he continues with a smile that suggests that he's only half-joking. "I miss that magic. It's like Xmas; you'll never get back that Xmas when you got your first Millennium Falcon. You can recreate it – and this is what people are doing now – they're trying to recreate something, but they've missed the point. They've missed the boat. You can't recreate magic, because it will just be shallow."

"And this whole thing with *TFD* isn't about saying, 'Oh, it was much better then'," adds Paul. "It's a nostalgic reflection on the magic of the time."

"It's a window to a particular point," Dani concludes, "where it was new and fresh. And it *cannot* be repeated." ✠

TOTAL FUCKING DARKNESS IS OUT MAY 5 VIA MORDGRIMM. CRADLE OF FILTH PLAY ALT-FEST IN AUGUST

Backstage at London's Marquee: Dani Filth, Paul Ryan, Paul Allender. November 1992



Dani Filth channels his inner Madonna and has a Vogue moment

HEAVY METAL

MILESTONES

YEAR ...1996

DUSK... AND HER EMBRACE BLOWS US ALL AWAY

It's been two years since COF put out *The Principle Of Evil Made Flesh*, but now it's time for world domination. The band hole up in the studio for the *Dusk... And Her Embrace* sessions in the hope of establishing themselves as a world-class act. They've gained interest from UK independent label Music For Nations, who provide them with additional support, affording them much better production for an album that'll capture their true spirit and help them fly the British flag in the Euro-dominated metal scene. The band also meet Sarah Jezebel Deva and hire her as a backing vocalist.

ALSO IN METAL...

Within Temptation form... Alice In Chains play their last show with Layne Staley... Sammy Hagar quits Van Halen, who hire David Lee Roth back, then fire him

GLOBAL NEWS

BEST-SELLING ALBUM

ALANIS MORISSETTE
Jagged Little Pill

BEST-SELLING SINGLE

THE FUGEES *Killing Me Softly With His Song*

BEST-SELLING MOVIE

Independence Day

RANDOM FACT

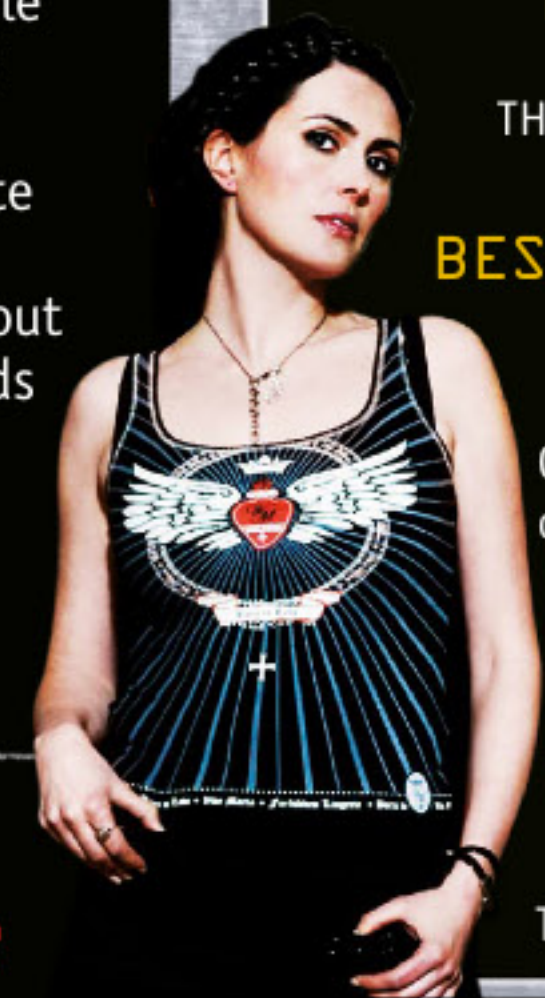
Chess computer Deep Blue defeats world champ Garry Kasparov for the first time.

BORN

Lorde, *Game Of Thrones'* Sophie Turner (Sansa Stark)

DIED

Tupac Shakur, Gene Kelly

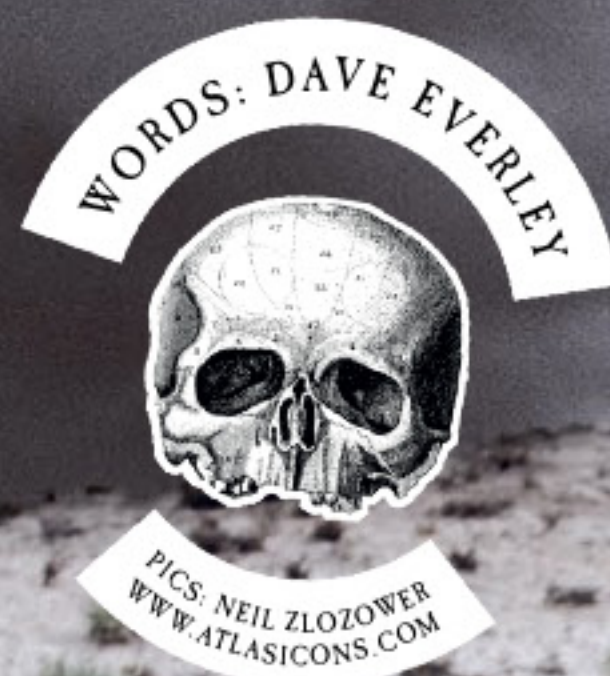


Within Temptation's Sharon den Adel. The band formed in the Netherlands in 1996



MIRACLE

He's been touring the world for nearly three decades and has become the living definition of a guitar god. Zakk Wylde looks into his past, present and future.



The last time Zakk Wylde looked at a photo of himself as a 21-year-old, he pissed himself laughing. In fact, every time he looks at a photo of himself as a 21-year-old, he pisses himself laughing. Back then, in 1988, he was still a kid. The year before, he'd been plain ol' Jeffrey Phillip Wielandt, raised in the blue-collar town of Jackson, New Jersey, where he worshipped at the altars of Jimmy Page, Jimi Hendrix and Randy Rhoads. All that changed when he was plucked from obscurity to play guitar in Ozzy Osbourne's band, replacing Jake E Lee, who himself had replaced the godlike Randy Rhoads. He was hardly a greenhorn, but his experience stretched no further than such dead-end local bands as Zyris and Stone Henge.

Joining Ozzy's band would turn the boy into a man. But first, a couple of things needed sorting. Firstly, the name: rock stars aren't called Jeffrey. Ozzy and his wife Sharon decreed that their newest recruit would henceforth be called Zakk Wylde. Then there was the image. The North New Jersey uniform of tattered denim 'n' scraggy leather wouldn't cut it in the MTV era. A veritable phalanx of stylists, hairdressers and wardrobe assistants were called in to turn the newly christened Zakk into a tight-trousered, bouffant-permed, dimple-chinned 80s rock god. If they'd made a TV show of his transformation, it would've been called 'Pimp My Guitarist'.

Today, more than a quarter of a century and a thicket of facial hair down the line, Zakk Wylde laughs once again at the thought of it.

"Brother, what you gonna do about it?" says the man who is more Viking marauder than pretty-boy pin-up these days. "Some guys, they see an old picture of themselves and go, 'I can't sign that. I can't even look at it!' For me, it's like looking at yearbook photos – you take the piss out of it. I take the piss out of myself, and the rest of the guys in the band take the piss out of me. Any of that stuff you read on the internet is fuckin' tame compared to the stuff we say about each other."

And with the benefit of hindsight, would he have chosen a name that might, 25 years on, make him sound less like an aging porn star?

"Oh man, that's nothing," he says. "I was originally Shirley Temple." And he roars with laughter once more.

Talking to Zakk is like having a conversation with an especially garrulous taxi driver. One who spends his time twisted round to face the back seat, letting rip with his views on everything and anything that crosses his mind, while not really giving much of a shit about what's going on the road in front of him. And, bizarrely, just like a taxi driver, he'll bang on about football given half a chance.

"I always call Ozzy's band The House That Randy Built," he says in a gruff but friendly Noo Joisey accent that's only slightly diluted by years of living in California. "It all started with Randy. It's like if you're talking about Manchester United players, you're gonna start with Georgie Best and then you end up getting to David Beckham."



THE MAN

“The whole BLS mindset is about hiking up your skirt and letting your vagina hang down”

ER, OK ZAKK, WHATEVER YOU SAY...



BLACK LABEL SOCIETY



"It's up to Vinnie, Rex and Philip: if they wanted to, then of course I'd do it"

ZAKK WOULD LOVE TO HONOUR HIS FALLEN BROTHER, DIME

Unexpected 'soccer' references aside, the image of Black Label Society's leader as a beer-snortin', bear-wrestling 21st-century Viking marauder is as enshrined in the public consciousness as his bullseye guitar. But it's also not quite the full measure of the man. For starters, as many folks know, he hasn't drunk alcohol for five years. Where once he'd go to bed at 6am after hours of partying in the remote, 10-acre San Fernando Valley compound he calls home, that's when he gets up these days. This morning, he fired up a cup of his own-brand Valhalla Java coffee, drove his kids to school and spent a few hours learning scales and practising. Later today, he'll hit the gym for what he calls some "iron therapy" in readiness for his band's upcoming "Canadian Crusade" (a 'tour', to you and me).

Making a BLS album sober is, he says, no easier or harder than it is drunk. His wife, Barbaranne ("the Immortal Beloved", in Zakk-speak) gives him a schedule, and he goes to work. "She goes, 'You've got 25 days,'" he says with a shrug. "So I spend 25 days writing a record."

It's an MO that works, if BLS's ninth album, *Catacombs Of The Black Vatican* (named after his home studio-cum-mancave), is anything to go by. More focused than many of the band's recent records, it touches on all the regular reference points: Sabbath, Zeppelin, Alice In Chains. But as always with BLS, it's the songs that deviate most from the template that are most revealing: here, it's *Scars* and *Angel Of Mercy* that stand out from the thud and blunder. They're low-key, introspective tracks that find this bearded behemoth tapping into his inner Elton John, something which he did for the first time with his *Pride And Glory* side-project, whose '94 release remains a cult classic.

"It's funny you mention Elton!" he erupts. "He was my first guy.

Before Sabbath, Zeppelin and all that, I remember seeing him doin' *Lucy In The Sky With Diamonds* on *The Sonny & Cher Show*. I got chills as a kid seeing that, and I went out and got as many Elton John records as I could."

That apparent dichotomy between the big guy banging out biker anthems and the sensitive dude paying tribute to a dead friend on *Scars* isn't actually seen as such to the man himself. And here Zakk Wylde outs himself as an unlikely feminist. Of sorts.

"The whole Black Label mindset is about strength, about being who you really are. About rolling up your sleeves, hiking up your skirt and letting your vagina hang down."

Pardon?

"Brother, the vagina is tough. [US actress] Betty White said it best: 'Why does everyone say: grow a set of balls? Balls aren't tough. You hit a guy in the balls, he falls down. The vagina, it can take a beating like nobody's business,



between kids coming out of it and everything else going in it. It should be rephrased, 'If you want to be tough, grow a vagina.'"

For all the hearty, hoist-yer-tankards-high bluster, Zakk is a natural-born diplomat who just wants everyone to be friends. If the UN are really looking for someone to resolve the problems in Syria, they could do worse than send him in.

Case in point #1: he's possibly the only man on Earth who can hang out with Axl and Slash without pissing the other one off. His friendship with both stems from the 90s, when he came within a whisker of joining GN'R.

"I was friends with Slash, and I knew the other guys just from seeing them around," he recalls. "Axl called me up, and I went down to just jam some riffs, have a blast. The band would have been Axl, Slash, me, Duff, Matt Sorum and Dizzy Reed. It could have been great, but it just never materialised. I'm buds with Axl and the guys in the band, I'm buds with Slash and his band. I'm like Sweden - I'm buddies with everybody."

Case in point #2: he's also possibly the only man who could engineer some sort of rapprochement between the two halves of Pantera. Though even he knows the enormity of that task.

"That's up to Vinnie, Rex and Philip," he says cautiously. "But if they ever wanted to do it, and said, 'Zakk, we want you to honour Dime's legacy and play his stuff on tour', of course I'd do it."

Could you help make it happen?

"Sure! Between getting the original GN'R and Led Zeppelin back together, splitting the atom, finding a cure for cancer, coming up with world peace and mopping the fuckin' kitchen floor!"

His innate diplomatic skills extend to the wider world of politics. Aside from some pro-war rants in the early 00s (at a time when pretty much every American musician was suggesting the US raze the Middle East) he plays it strictly middle of the road, coming over like your average blue-collar Joe. Dave Mustaine he isn't.

"I'm friends with Tom Morello, and he's all about that stuff," he says. "I just laugh when my friends get pissed off about politics. I go, 'Look, the only thing people care about is whether they have jobs, whether they can pay their bills and provide for their family, whether they can buy something nice at the end of the day.' If you're President, Prime Minister or whatever, and you're doing that and keeping the country safe, you're doing your job, man."



Zakk worshipping the riffs in the Black Vatican



PILGRIM



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Below

Across The Dark River



BELOW – The Swedish doom band who pays tribute to epic and dark sounds of: Nightfall by Candlemass, Headless Cross by Black Sabbath and Conspiracy by King Diamond. Recorded at Andy LaRocque's (King Diamond) Sonic Train Studios. "This is one of the heaviest bands I have worked with in the studio for a very long time, and the sounds so far is amazing! And always great to work with great musicians!"
Across The Dark River - out 14.04.14

ALSO AVAILABLE

GOATWHORE

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A Haunting Curse LP – out 31.03.14



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21st BIRMINGHAM – O2 Academy 2

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AMON AMARTH

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12th BELFAST – Limelight
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BOLT THROWER

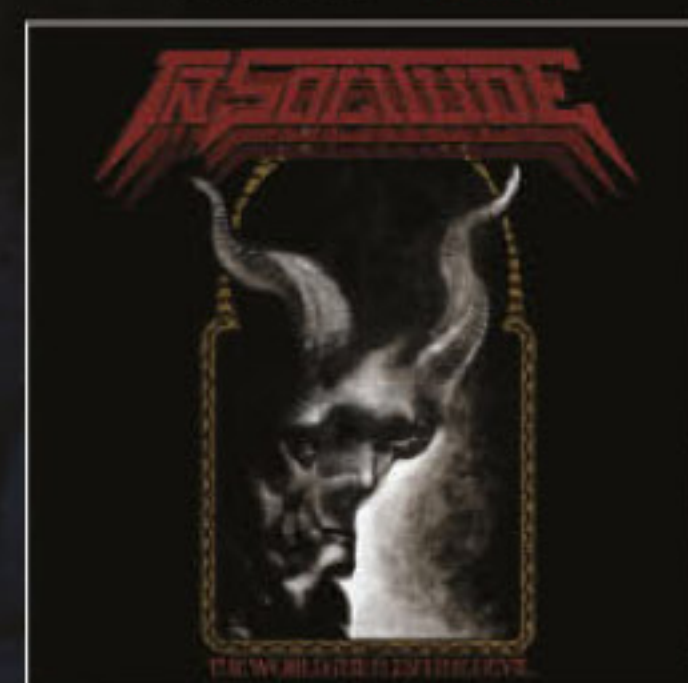
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ON TOUR NOW!



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Last Rites LP – out now!



IN SOLITUDE

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SONY MUSIC

BLACK LABEL SOCIETY

And is your President doing a good job?

"I think he's doing the best job he can in regards to those things. Things go up a little, then they come down. They go up again, then they go down again. But the Titanic's not sinking. The world's a little rough right now, but it's gonna get smoother."

Zakk Wylde talks a brilliant game, no doubt about it. While his band have might have plateaued in terms of success – let's face it, they're never going to headline Download, a fact of which the man himself is utterly accepting ("Maybe we can headline the fuckin' aftershow party. In the basement.") – what they do have is a legion of diehard fans who wear their badge like a biker gang wears their colours.

"We don't have fans, we have *fams* – as in families. It's like The Grateful Dead on steroids. If you see some guy with the colours on in a pub, you start talking to him and the next thing you know you're best man at this guy's wedding."

Why is that? Is it the music? Is it the Cult Of Zakk?

"I don't know, man. It's a religion. A religion of confusion! Everyone's, like, 'What the fuck's goin' on?' But everyone's happy, and that's what matters."

It's telling that he describes BLS as a 'religion'. Zakk has made no secret of his beliefs. Born and raised a Catholic, he describes himself only half-jokingly as "a soldier of Christ". How often does he go to church?

"I go to church every Sunday when I'm home," he says.

"Especially now I've replaced the booze with glue."

You're friends with Dave Mustaine. Do you ever pray together?

"Dave and us were on the road. He's a good dude. I've known him for a while..."

So when you were on the road, did you pray together?

"[Seriously] No, we did not pray together. [Long pause]

We spoke about another religion. [Another long pause, then much laughter] The religion of Jimmy Page! The religion of awesomeness!"

"I go to church every Sunday when I'm home, especially now I've replaced the booze with glue"

ZAKK'S TONGUE IS WEDGED FIRMLY IN HIS CHEEK

On the subject of awesomeness, if you had to arrange the guitarists in Ozzy's solo band in order of greatness, where would you put yourself?

"Oh man, let's break it down like the Catholic church. Ozzy would have to be God, and Randy would be Jesus Christ, the Messiah. Which means Jake E Lee, Gus G and me, we're the Pontiffs. We're the ones who keep spreadin' the gospel."

When you joined Ozzy's band, back when you were starting out, did you aspire to be one of the greats?

"Yeah, sure," he says, sounding like it's the dumbest question ever. "Everybody does. That's the reason why you have posters of Jimmy Page and Randy Rhoads and Frank Marino on the wall. You want to join 'em up there one day."

And do you think you've made it? Do you think you're one of the greats?

"My whole thing is that it's a trickle-down effect – the tree of knowledge. If I can inspire a kid to play the way that Randy or Jimmy inspired me, and that kid checks out those guys because of it, then that's the beautiful thing. You've passed down the knowledge. It's like Georgie Best and David Beckham."

And with that, everyone's favourite God-lovin', Elton John-worshippin', Manchester United-referencin' Viking marauder (semi-retired) guffaws to the heavens one more time. ✠

**CATACOMBS OF THE BLACK VATICAN IS OUT APRIL 7
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HEAVY METAL

MILESTONES

YEAR
...1987

ZAKK LANDS THE OZZY GIG

Jeffrey Wielandt, only 20 years old, hears Ozzy on Howard Stern's radio show, saying that Jake E Lee is no longer in the band and he's on the lookout for a new guy. The young guitarist, who spends his days pumping gas at a local service station and giving guitar lessons, is encouraged by his girlfriend Barbaranne to go for it. A few weeks later after a Zyris gig, he is approached by Dave Feld, a young music mogul who offers to get a tape over to Ozzy photographer Mark Weiss. A few weeks later, the phone rings and it's Sharon Osbourne offering to fly him out to LA. Four hundred guitarists audition, but only one man gets the job. And the rest, as they say, is history.

ALSO IN METAL...

Nikki Sixx overdoses... Def Leppard release *Hysteria*... Bon Jovi headline Monsters Of Rock supported by Dio, Metallica, Anthrax and WASP

GLOBAL NEWS

BEST-SELLING ALBUM

BON JOVI *Slippery When Wet*

BEST-SELLING SINGLE

BON JOVI *Livin' On A Prayer*

BEST-SELLING MOVIE

Three Men And A Baby

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DIED

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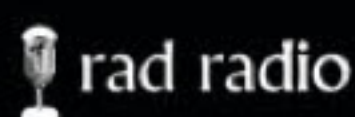
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BRITISH PROG-METALLERS PROMETHIUM ARE BACK WITH A VENGEANCE WITH THE HIGHLY ANTICIPATED NEW ALBUM

ORIGINS



Beautiful day, beautiful family, beautiful home. It's surprising Dez manages to write any angry lyrics at all...



Given that DevilDriver/Coal Chamber main man Dez Fafara once had a fan camp on his lawn in the hopes of meeting him, it'd be unwise to tell you exactly where he lives. It'd also be damn near impossible. We're 90 minutes south of LA, somewhere off the freeway. There's a *Stepford Wives* quality to the area, everything squeaky clean, and while Murrieta may be the second safest city in the US, with one of the fastest-growing populations, it's still the kind of place you'd pass on your way to somewhere

"He was the most chilled guy and out of nowhere he got cancer and died," says Dez. "I had his ashes on a surfboard in the middle of winter; I paddled out and dumped them in the water. We kept some and put them in a huge tiki. It made me think very differently about life and get to a point where everything has meaning, every conversation, every time you have dinner with your family. His passing made me more of an isolationist, like, 'I'm not going to waste my time being around people I don't want to be around.' I moved out here because I'm pretty antisocial. I don't do nightclubs and all that shit, I just want to be with my family and go onstage. This area is

upstairs, a decent collection of vinyl with everything from GBH to Elvis, and, of course the usual memorabilia, signed *Star Wars* posters, gold discs and such... Hell, thanks to a homemade vocal booth in his ground floor den, Dez doesn't even have to go to a studio. Having been told it would cost \$18,000 to do vocals he built it for \$4,000! "It's dead silent!" he grins. "It's almost like a deprivation chamber and I find that I get a lot done, especially lyrically. I'll listen

"I JUST DON'T WANT TO BE IN AN ENVIRONMENT THAT'S FLOODED WITH BOOZE AND COCAINE"

DEZ PREFERS TO KEEP TO HIMSELF ON TOUR

else, barely noticing it was here. It transpires that the lovely Mrs Fafara made breakfast for the hapless fan, before kindly explaining that her husband would be on tour for three months and he couldn't wait in the garden.

Today we're greeted at the door by Dez and his two dogs, a 165lb Great Dane called Sly – who has one blue eye and one brown – and a Doberman, Bacchus – who'll follow us around the house farting like something has died in his bottom. Doggy guffs aside, it's a beautiful place, a mini-mansion, Tardis-like in its ability to look bigger on the inside than it is on the outside. Rather impressively, the first thing you see when you walk into the hallway is a framed print of a picture from an old *Hammer* shoot, a gift from his wife, alongside a collage made by Dez's best friend Jason a week before he passed away.

a beautiful place to raise children; it's calm and relaxing, and the local grocery store people know our names. I really like that."

Don't you find it a bit *Stepford Wives*? "It's... normal," laughs Dez. "I'm friends with all my neighbours. I wanted a peaceful existence for my family and something I could afford on a rock'n'roll budget. I was living in Santa Barbara and there was no way we could afford a house. My whole family's out this way, my parents have a ranch up the way, and all my brothers and sisters live around me. I'm a real family guy, I chill out with the family, make dinner, play pool with my kids..."

A further tour of the house reveals a few reasons why you'd never want to leave. There's a pool and hot tub out back, a pool table and pinball machine



Dez never misses a cue

MEET THE FAFARAS

HE WAS ONCE ONE OF THE BIGGEST FREAKS ON THE SUNSET STRIP, LIVING A LIFE OF DECADENCE AND DEBAUCHERY. THE DEZ FAFARA OF TODAY IS A FAR MORE SERENE INDIVIDUAL...

WORDS:
MORAT

PICS:
TRAVIS SHINN



to a song 10 times overs and then just go and sit in there for half an hour and come up with lyrics. I mean, I live on a bus with 12 dudes!"

Dez jokes that his home is like "15 back lounges – each one is a chill area that you can go to get away," and while the pictures tell of a family man, the book collection tells of his beliefs in the esoteric.

"I read tarot, I read leaves, I can throw bones," he says. "I read a lot, everything from Plato to Grimassi, which is Italian witchcraft. I'm a fan of Crowley, he had it down. Anton LaVey was a charlatan. A lot of the guys in NASA were working with Crowley and the Golden Dawn. He wasn't afraid of entities and I think the first thing is you have to have no fear. My wife and I both devour books at a crazy level."

It's a little-known fact that Dez is a Freemason. Does he have to kill us if he tells us about it?

"No, I do not have to kill you if I tell you," laughs Dez. "I got voted into the lodge in North Hollywood and I'm extremely happy about it."

Excuse our colossal ignorance, but what is it beyond being an intriguingly secretive organisation?

"It makes good men better," says Dez, intriguingly secretly. "And I wanted an environment where I didn't just have to interact with people in the music business. A lot of those people are lacking some things in their personal lives and I needed to hang out with different people. So I'm looking for good dudes to hang out with and where do you go? Do you go to a bar or do you go to a dating site? For a good man, I believe you look to Freemasonry. Some

Silence is golden.
And a snip at \$4,000



"I READ TAROT CARDS, I READ LEAVES, AND I CAN THROW BONES"

DEZ DOESN'T JUST DABBLE – HE KNOWS HIS SHIT

people go to the church, but that's not for me. You have to have a belief in a grand architect, which means there are guys in my lodge who are Catholic, Muslim, etc. I got into it through doing charity work. My friend needed surgery or he was going to die, then my sister got cancer and I did a song for her called *Dark Meadowlark*, and a lot of people came to the table and helped her out. Through the charity work some people pointed me to Freemasonry."

Dez's search for the spiritual came, he says, from a Catholic stepfather, a mother who was a Christian Scientist, and a Baptist school education. His father, actor Tiger Fafara of [50s US show] *Leave It To Beaver* fame, was Lutheran.

"I started searching the origins of history and religion and the methodology of theology hit me," Dez explains. "It's like OK, the Catholics stole this from them, and the Christians stole this from the Pagans, who got this from the Sumerians, who got this from the Babylonians... Now they're finding cultures 10,000 years older than the pyramids with the same writing on them. I got really into Italian witchcraft about 15 years ago, too, and that's when I started getting heavily into divination. Divination has become a part of life. For others I'll do it on a whim, but for myself, maybe twice a year. And that's not in a moment of dark times, it's more like, 'Where am I going and what am I not seeing?' I've got two sets of cards that are behind glass because I just can't use them anymore. They're just so dead on!"



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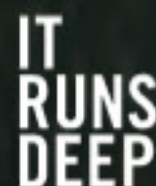
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So do you think our lives are predetermined?
 "I think we're all predetermined," says Dez, "but others can read our paths. I'll do readings for others and my wife did one for John 5's wife a couple of days ago, but, for now, I don't read for myself. It's the same thing as looking at your own press. I don't read my own press and I don't read my own cards, I know that the path is going to be set however it's going to be set and I'd rather not know."

This being California, Dez packs one of those funny weed vaporiser pens. He's in favour of marijuana for medicinal purposes.

"My parents put me on Ritalin for years because I'm ADD," he says, as the little blue light comes on. "I'm so hyperactive I have to smoke to slow down and have a conversation. If you're reading this, and your parents have you on those drugs, I'm not saying go to medical marijuana, but it'd be nice if you could. When I found it I started getting As and Bs in school and excelled at everything. I hated math, then I suddenly got it and approached it like art."

Inevitably we get to the subject of UFOs. Didn't Dez once say he had UFO footage from outside here?

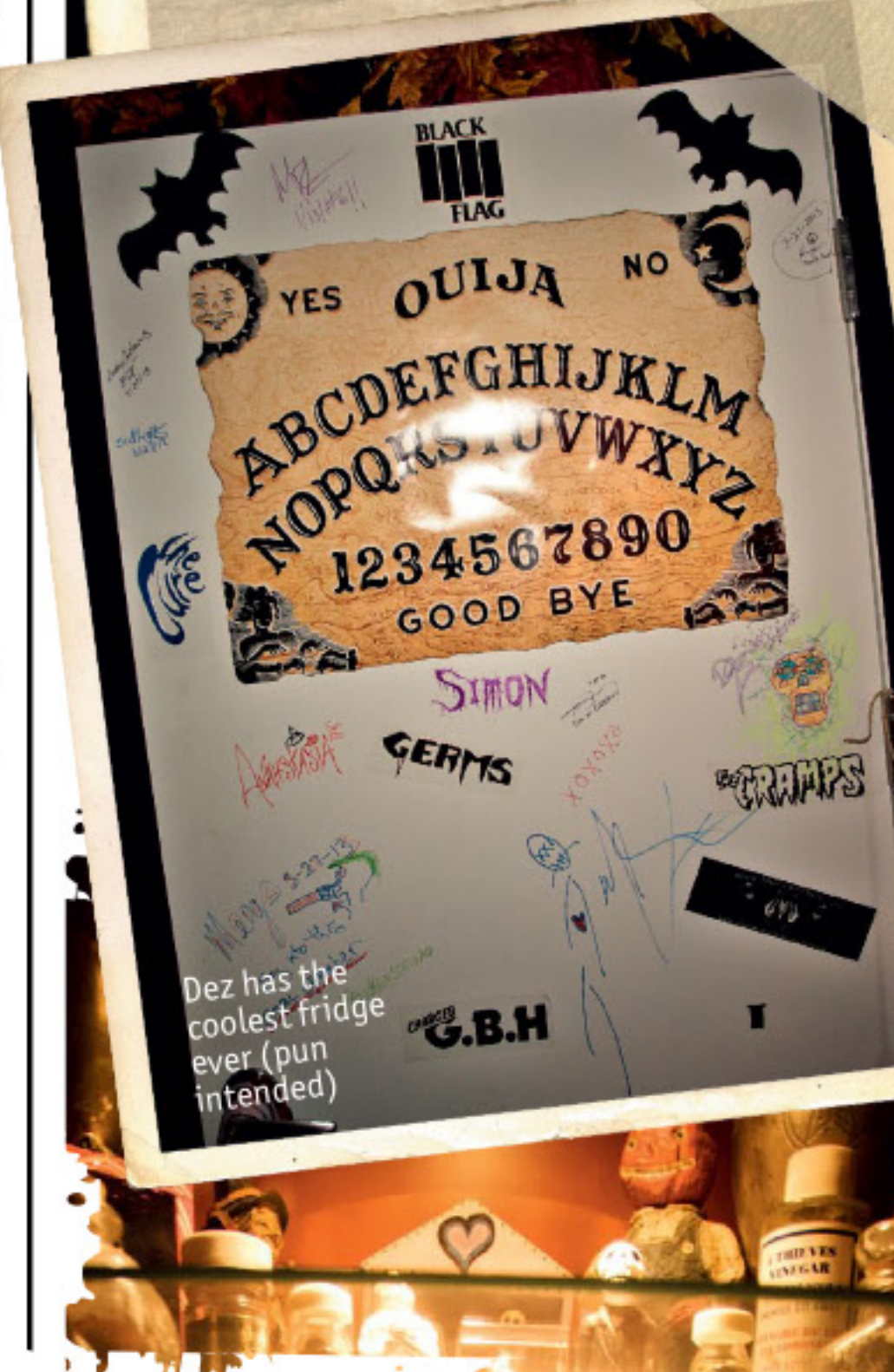
"No, that was in Santa Barbara and I have the VCR tape if you know how to convert it. It's incredible daytime footage! We went outside at about 8am and there was this huge UFO, going into itself and splitting into twos and threes. We have it on tape for about 20 minutes, it's not like some two-minute thing. We have really beautiful clear nights out here though, I just haven't done any sky-watching."

It's a easy to imagine Dez and his family relaxing here between his time on tour, sky-watching, chilling, sharing their lives. There's a nice vibe to the place, Italian family almost, like there are always big meals and a bigger welcome. Dez keeps to himself, hanging out with his family and close friends, and admits that he can do whole tours without meeting another band.

"People can say, 'Oh, he's a dick and he doesn't hang out' but it's far from it," he insists. "I just



It's safe to say Dez is a very content man



"FOR A GOOD MAN, I BELIEVE YOU LOOK TO FREEMASONRY"

DEZ ON FINDING NEW FRIENDS

don't want to be in an environment that's so flooded with booze and cocaine. I found a way to do what I do, but I'm a hermit, y'know?"

And yet for all his family values, Dez is wearing a black magic shirt. How does he reconcile the two?

"It's yin and yang, man," says Dez. "There is no birth without death, no good without bad. And you need to know your magic, you can't just be some white magician. There is dark magic you can do, but you'd better watch out because it'll come back to yourself and bite you on the ass. If somebody's really deserving and you're going into it meaning them harm because they've done you so much harm, or maybe you're trying to stop them harming you... I believe in that." He pauses and smiles. "But I don't have to do much of that. I keep my karma clean." ✨

DEVILDRIVER TOUR THE UK WITH SYLOSIS AND BLEED FROM WITHIN THROUGH APRIL. WINTER KILLS IS OUT NOW VIA NAPALM

What, you expected a display case full of Royal Doulton?



HEAVY METAL

MILESTONES

YEAR ...1997

COAL CHAMBER TAKE THE METAL WORLD BY STORM

It's 1997 and a demo tape has been doing the rounds through LA's music scene belonging to a bunch of freaky unknowns who call themselves Coal Chamber. The demo eventually lands on the desk of Monte Conner, A&R head honcho at Roadrunner Records, who signs up the band for their debut, leading with future metal dancefloor anthem *Loco*. A few months later and it's off to Europe to cut their teeth with Machine Head, Napalm Death, Slipknot and Skinlab, making Coal Chamber one of the most successful bands of the year.

ALSO IN METAL...

Ozzy rejoins Sabbath... Anders Colsefni gets replaced by Corey Taylor in some little band called Slipknot... Soundgarden call it a day

GLOBAL NEWS

BEST-SELLING ALBUM
 SPICE GIRLS *Spice*

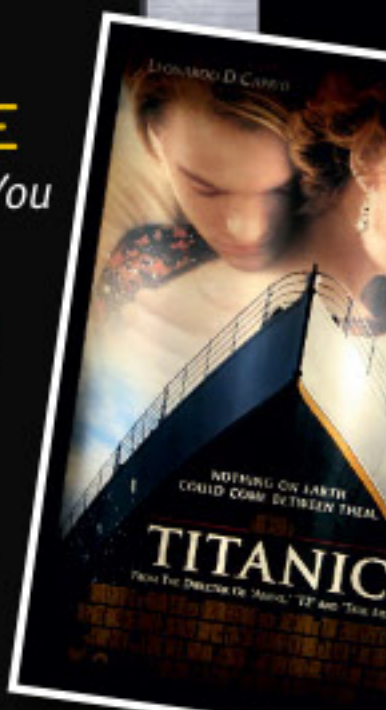
BEST-SELLING SINGLE
 ELTON JOHN *Something About the Way You Look Tonight* / *Candle in the Wind*

BEST-SELLING MOVIE
Titanic

RANDOM FACT
 The UK give Hong Kong back to China

BORN
 Chloë Grace Moretz, *Game Of Thrones*
 Maisie Williams (Arya Stark)

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THE GOSPEL

THIS MONTH'S GOOD, BAD AND UGLY

RONNIE JAMES DIO

THIS IS YOUR LIFE

| RHINO |

Metal's A Team get together to honour the king

Although it's been four years since Ronnie James Dio died, the great man's absence is still keenly felt. His posthumous activities show no signs of letting up, however, specifically in the case of the Stand Up And Shout Cancer Fund run by his widow, Wendy Dio. This album of Dio, Rainbow and Black Sabbath covers raises money for said charity, and features an array of musicians of a startlingly high calibre, revealing just how fondly he was – and is – regarded by his peers. *This Is Your Life* is also a clear reminder of how amazing a songwriter Ronnie was – and, of course, a stark illustration that when it came to the art of heavy metal vocals, he was unequalled.

That said, the singers here have a damn good go at matching the man's superhuman voicebox. In terms of natural warbling skills, only Glenn Hughes and Joey Belladonna of Anthrax have anything close to Ronnie's unearthly pipes, and both golden-larynxed fellows deliver the goods in fine style on *Catch The Rainbow* and *Neon Knights* respectively. But hold on – here's Corey Taylor, accompanied by musos such as Steel Panther guitarist Satchel and Stone Sour drummer Roy Mayorga, delivering what has to be the vocal performance of his career on *Rainbow In The Dark*. Corey wails so operatically on



this song that it's hard to believe it's the same guy who barks out all those guttural Slipknot tunes.

Metallica, easily the biggest commercial name here, give Dio's back catalogue the same treatment they gave Mercyful Fate back in 1998, bolting together *A Light In The Black*, *Tarot Woman*, *Stargazer* and *Kill The King*, and calling it *Ronnie Rising Medley*. This heads-down moshpit stuff is a timely reminder that Ronnie's music wasn't all about wistful atmospheres and soaring melodies: at times, it was heavy as fuck.

The sense of respect that runs through the album is profound. Killswitch Engage have been playing *Holy Diver* for some years now, but their version never gets old, with its precise riffing and widescreen vocals. The same goes for Adrenaline Mob's *The Mob Rules* and Doro's *Egypt (The Chains Are On)*. Halestorm's *Straight Through The Heart* is an indicator

that the youth value Ronnie's output as highly as the older, longer-established artists, too.

Two veritable supergroups team up for the occasion, with Jimmy Bain, Brian Tichy and crew tackling *I* and a Rob Halford-fronted quintet delivering a splendiferous *Man On The Silver Mountain*. But in case this all sounds a bit sombre, be reassured that there's room for humour here too, with Tenacious D bringing a mockingly earnest cover of *The Last In Line* to the table.

Ronnie himself closes the album with the beautiful *This Is Your Life*, the strings-heavy piano-and-vocals song which signed off Dio's largely unliked *Angry Machines* in 1996. 'What if the flame won't last forever?' he sings. The lesson? *This Is Your Life* is a poignant reminder that singers may die, but that great music is immortal.

8

JOEL McIVER

FACT

Ronnie's strangest guest appearance was on a cover of *Holy Diver* for easy listening singer Pat Boone's album, *In A Metal Mood: No More Mr Nice Guy*.



Lzzy Hale

| HALESTORM |

WHAT DOES RONNIE JAMES DIO MEAN TO YOU?

"He means everything to me, as a singer and a hero. My parents got me into him because they were fans."

DID YOU EVER MEET RONNIE IN PERSON?

"We had the pleasure of opening for Ronnie at one of his last gigs, at the House Of Blues in Atlantic City. The way he treated his fans really resonated with me. He signed everything for them. And then he came back to say goodbye to us. That's the measure of the man. He had just spent ages talking to fans, and signing everything they put in front of him, but he still found time to talk to us. He told me something really important that night: 'To us, this is just one more night on a long tour. But for the fans here it's a special, one-off night that means the world to them. You have to treat the occasion as important, because that's what it means to the fans'. Ronnie could easily have stayed out of the way, and ignored everyone, and nobody would have thought any less of him. But that wasn't his way. He gave the fans everything onstage, and then gave them more offstage. Just watching him was so inspirational. He was a special person."

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE STRAIGHT THROUGH THE HEART TO COVER?

"We chose it because it's very straight ahead and to the point. It's classic Ronnie – he never overcomplicated a song. And nobody else has ever covered it. I hope we did justice to the song and to his memory. But merely to be asked to record a song for this album is a privilege."

COVER STORIES

FOUR MORE TRIBUTE ALBUMS YOU MUST HEAR



Nativity In Black

SONY - 1994

The first of three various-artists albums devoted to Sabbath, *NIB* gathered a top cast to cover Ozzy and Tony's best bits. Highlights included Sepultura's cover of *Symptom Of The Universe* and Faith No More's amazing *War Pigs*.



Metallic Attack: The Ultimate Tribute

BIG DEAL - 2004

Some may snigger at bands trying to do justice to Metallica's catalogue, but titter not; Motörhead's cover of *Whiplash* bagged Lemmy a Grammy award in 2005. Criminally, it was his first.



Slatanic Slaughter: A Tribute To Slayer

BLACKEND - 2004

There are loads of Slayer covers albums, but a good place to start is the first *Slatanic Slaughter*, in which Cradle Of Filth, Dissection, Hypocrisy, Anathema et al turn the evil-o-meter to 11.



Thriller: A Metal Tribute To Michael Jackson

DEADLINE MUSIC - 2013

The King Of Pop was an oddball but he wrote some killer tunes, reinterpreted here by Chuck Billy, Paul Di'Anno... and the inevitable Alien Ant Farm.



Triptykon: everything blacker than everything else

TRIPTYKON

MELANA CHASMATA

| CENTURY MEDIA |

Swiss metal master redefines the art of heavy

As a result of metal's ongoing expansion and diversification, notions of what it means to be 'heavy' have become as numerous and variable as the music itself. For some, 'heavy' is simply a matter of sonic power and precision; for others, everything hinges on the harnessing of atmosphere and otherworldly heft. But for Thomas Gabriel Fischer, whether as driving force behind Hellhammer and Celtic Frost or in more recent times as leader of Triptykon, heaviness has always emanated from within because, as is more than apparent from everything he says and does in the public eye, *life* is heavy and death, the inescapable black cloud on all of our horizons, represents the moment when that heaviness crushes our souls to dust.

Having begun their story with *Eparistera Daimones*, an album that reaffirmed the Swiss legend's mastery of riff-driven musical oppression and catharsis, Triptykon have little to prove on album number two. Bearing their uniqueness like a virulent but inspirational affliction, they have already constructed such a convincing and compelling world of sound that any variations on established themes would stand proudly and dramatically apart from 99% of everything released under the metallic banner this year. But while *Melana Chasmata* shares plenty of its predecessor's structure and gait, that core of continuity comes shrouded in a fog of new ideas and inexorable regeneration.



And yes, *Melana Chasmata* is gloriously and unfathomably heavy too.

First track *Tree Of Suffocating Souls* is the perfect bridge between Triptykon's first chapter and this new, more elaborate unfolding. Those riffs – impossibly dark and wild, but never less than dogmatic and dignified – are instantly recognisable but subtly reimagined in more complex sonic shades, while the arrival of Thomas's unmistakable growl sounds evermore like an echo from the mortal abyss. Similarly, the deeply unsettling *Boleskine House* – named after the former residence of notorious occultist Aleister Crowley – stridently mirrors the first album's dense myopia while dropping nebulous hints about where this journey is heading next. As mesmerising as those first two songs are, it is the next – *Altar Of Deceit* – that truly threatens to bring reality crashing down around us. Channelling

the raw horror of Hellhammer's *Triumph Of Death*, Triptykon wield riffs so pitch-black and pernicious that their dismal aura promises to block out the sun

forever and, suddenly, the word 'heavy' no longer seems sufficient to describe what's happening. Fittingly, the mischievous spectres of industrial icons Einstürzende Neubauten and no-wave gurus Swans rear their heads on *Demon Pact* and *Aurorae* respectively: two songs that, again, meticulously tinker with this band's formula without losing its inherent power or bleak, emotional oomph. And then *Black Snow* arrives: an excruciating but purifying exercise in three-dimensional morbidity and nihilistic grandeur that is, seemingly by accident, as disorientating and woozily hallucinatory as any more self-consciously psychedelic modern metal fare.

An exhausting but ultimately rewarding trip through the grim catacombs of consciousness, *Melana Chasmata* delivers the goods and sets the rulebook ablaze. Right now, Triptykon are untouchable and, inevitably, as heavy as it gets.

DOM LAWSON



Thomas Gabriel Fischer

| VOCALS, GUITAR |

WHAT ARE THE MAIN DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THIS AND YOUR FIRST ALBUM?

"The album is both different and a continuation at the same time. It is different due to vast and, in some cases, distressing changes that occurred in the lives of certain bandmembers – myself included – in the course of the past three years. At the same time, the album very clearly sounds like Triptykon. Not least due to the fact that it is both an amalgamation and development of the music created in Hellhammer and Celtic Frost."

HOW IMPORTANT IS HR GIGER'S ARTWORK TO THE NEW RECORD?

"The cover art of every album I have ever created has always been extremely important to me in terms of the album's gestation. I will not and cannot commence work on an album without having determined what it will look like. This is even more pronounced in the case of Giger, because being granted to work with his art is an incredible honour. His work is staggering; it is absolutely sacred to me."

FACT

HR Giger's painting *Penis Landscape* was used inside the gatefold to Dead Kennedy's *Frankenchrist* album, resulting in an obscenity trial.



Ageless Oblivion

PENTHOS

| SIEGE OF AMIDA |

Rulebook-trashing Brit-death scamps return with a vengeance

While most of the so-called 'modern' death metal scene reduces everything down to a calculated and soulless exercise in pinning interchangeable riffs to a ProTools grid, bands like Ageless Oblivion are worth their weight in toxic gold. Expanding on the boundary-shunning invention of their remarkable *Temples Of Transcendent Evolution* debut, these young Brits have fulfilled their early promise and delivered a second album that bulges with ingenuity, subversion and gleeful nastiness. Precise and destructive when in flat-out attack mode on opener *Wolf's Head*, they're also masters of the kind of slow-burning wall of sound beloved of Neurosis and their post-metal acolytes. The difference here is that everything is executed with DM's snarling aggression whacked violently into the red, so even something as excruciatingly morbid as 12-minute fever dream *Where Wasps Now Nest* connects like a knuckle duster to the eye. With a surfeit of riffs, atmosphere and intelligence, Ageless Oblivion are one of the most fascinating and exciting metal bands in the UK right now.

8

DOM LAWSON



Amoral

FALLEN LEAVES & DEAD SPARROWS

| GRAPHITE |

Retro-fuelled Finns set themselves a high bar

The grandly named *Fallen Leaves & Dead Sparrows* is the sixth album from a former death metal band that, for the last few years and exasperated with ill-fitting labels, have called themselves "ambassadors of classic rock for the 21st century." It's one hell of

a boast. Musically speaking, the Finns drop such iconic names as Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin, Queen and Black Sabbath in their latest biography. In keeping with these lofty ambitions, *Fallen Leaves...* is a concept piece about what Amoral term "one big mistake that cannot be undone", a parable of someone in twilight years whose life has gone down the shitter. Ari Koivunen has a warm, versatile voice that, along with the fluid interplay between guitarists Ben Varon and Masi Hukari, brings compositions such as *Blueprints* and *If Not Here, Where?* to ripe fruition. This is an album of admirable commercial maturity, though whether it's the watershed Amoral believe it to be is something that

7

only time will reveal.

DAVE LING



Brutality Will Prevail

SUSPENSION OF CONSCIOUSNESS

| SIEGE OF AMIDA |

Welsh bruisers throw their weight and expand their horizons

Opting for a mace and serrated blade as opposed to the precision of most hardcore influenced-metallers, Brutality Will Prevail ably live up to their moniker. Big, ugly riffs and breakdowns dominate opener *Tower Of Silence* and propulsive two-minute rager *Martyr-Anxiety* while the sludgy call-to-arms of *Abandon* is catchy and fierce. The quintet show there's more to them than belligerent heaviness, though. All over the place are snippets of clean vocals, dexterous musical interludes and clever rhythmic nuances. Most leftfield is *Burden Of Love*'s bluesy refrain that owes more to Baroness than Throwdown, and Louis Gauthier's sung vocals, which fit comfortably

with the suffocating mood of *Suspension...* Even the closing title track, which bulldozers everything in its path before heading into breakneck thrash territory, isn't afraid to throw in a bit of melody and descends into an unhinged clanger of textures and freestyle rhythms. Yes, BWP do exactly what they say on the tin, but there's also

7

far more to them than meets the eye.

ADAM REES



Buried In Verona

FACELESS

| ARTERY |

Oz metalcore crew take a turn towards the middle ground

Produced by Joey Sturgis, the sound of this fourth studio album is immaculate and well suited to the hard rock tones Buried In Verona adopted in their previous release. Listeners who prefer the band's heavier side might have a hard time with it, but anyone who enjoys their aggression masked with cleaner choruses should be pleased by the number of memorable songs. *Revival* gains them more street cred with gruffer yells, gang shouts and swifter fretwork. It has a strong chorus and powers through in a way that means you can't help but be seduced by the breakdowns. The softer tones of *Eclipse* and *Graves* are more formulaic. The strength of this band is really in the songwriting. *Splintered* and *Illuminate* are catchy and persuasively euphoric, but *Set Me On Fire* wouldn't be out of place on a 30 Seconds To Mars album. When they're capable of tracks like the hardcore-infused but emotional *Catatonic*, their foray into such soft territory can be frustrating.

6

NIK YOUNG



ANIMALS AS LEADERS

THE JOY OF MOTION

| SUMERIAN |

Instrumental explorers prove less is more

Let's face it, instrumental music never has been or ever will be cool. But the recent surge of bands opting to let their music do the talking did prove one thing: there is geek-driven power in numbers. And if there are any doubts over whether Animals As Leaders are still the leaders of the pack after what feels like a long wait since 2011's *Weightless*, *The Joy Of Motion* will silence them in one fell sweep. Tosin Abasi isn't just one of the best guitarists in metal, he's one of the best in music. That said, it's not really the level of technicality that makes album number three such a mesmerising listen, but rather the level of restraint. The smooth fusion leitmotifs on *Another Year*, *Physical Education* and *The Future That Awaited Me* will etch their way into your brain before you can say the words 'frosted shreddies'. Yes there are chords you'd need more surgery than Michael Jackson to be able to play and arpeggios that probably keep Steve Vai awake at night, but the Washington



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trio have managed to deliver an instrumental record that is actually as catchy as hell.

AMIT SHARMA

THIS MONTH IN METAL

ALBUM MONOLITHS FROM THE VAULT



SOULFLY | *Soulfly* | ROADRUNNER | MAY 1998 |

Max Cavalera introduced Soulfly to the world 18 months after his controversial resignation from Sepultura. With producer Ross Robinson remaining at the helm, it wasn't too far removed from *Roots*, his final release

with that band. "If Soulfly is anything to go by, Sepultura are well and truly fucked as Max holds all the creative aces and many more besides," surmised *Hammer's* reviewer Dan Silver, awarding the album

eight out of 10. "Cavalera hasn't strolled too far from the blueprint that he laid down with Sepultura, however there are enough sparks in evidence to suggest that the real fireworks are yet to come."



Zakk Wylde: the metal warrior abides

BLACK LABEL SOCIETY

CATACOMBS OF THE BLACK VATICAN

| MASCOT |

Zakk Wylde adds more strings to his bow

You can always count on Uncle Zakk to crank the Marshalls to 11 but many fans would agree the last few BLS records didn't quite hit home. Not compared to the pulverising strength of 1919 *Eternal* or *The Blessed Hellride*, which, along with 1994's *Pride And Glory* side-project, captured Zakk's finest moments outside Ozzy's band. So will their ninth offering appeal to anyone outside the diehard chapters around the world? Damn right it will. You'd be forgiven for thinking it was Alice In Chains blasting out from the opening sounds of *Fields Of Unforgiveness*, and that's no bad thing at all. There's a maturity to the Zakk attack and his signature bloozy howls feel more focused than they have in years. Even those pinched harmonics have been used more sparingly instead of thrown in willy nilly (the BLS drinking game was wrecking lives before Neknomination). With three soul-searching country ballads breaking up the bonfire



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of old leather and motorcycle grease, *Catacombs...* is a metal warrior returning to former glories.

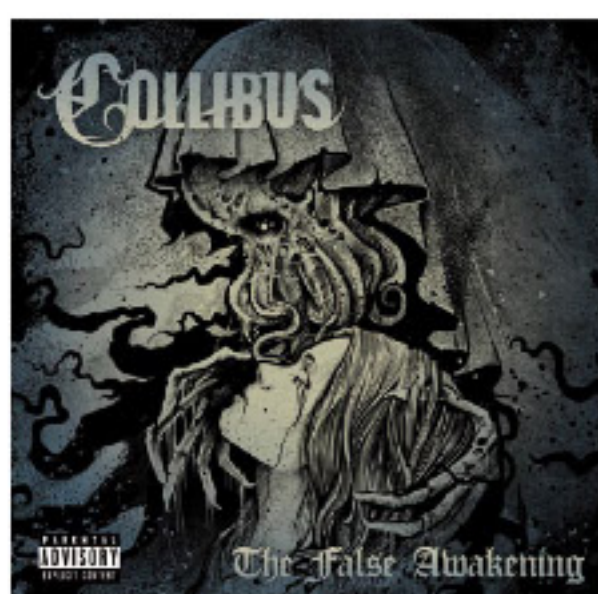
AMIT SHARMA

Last Album I Bought

CHRIS MOTIONLESS
Motionless In White

{ STICK TO YOUR GUNS
Diamond

"They're one of my favourite bands and I'll back them for as long as they're around. Bands with a huge positive message are underrated, so I wanted to show my support. More people need them in their lives."



Collibus

THE FALSE AWAKENING

| WWW.COLLIBUS.COM |

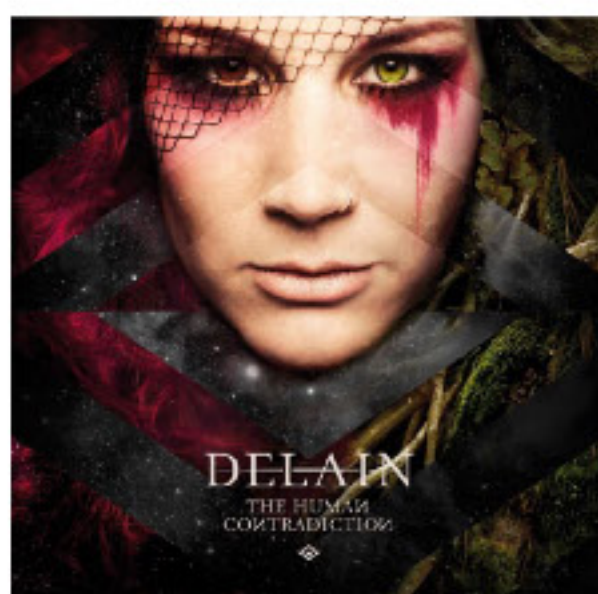
Parliament-invading rockers get the nod from Queen

Mancunian progressive metallers Collibus have a great many things in their favour. Dr Brian May of Queen considers himself a fan, having praised both their "scary musicianship" and the "passion and power" of the group's singer Gemma Fox, and last year they became the first metal band to perform live at the House Of Commons. A slot at this summer's Download is already confirmed. You'd expect them to pitch a sound that's several notches above the ranks of British hopefuls, and that's exactly what they do on an independently released debut album that reeks of future promise. Favouring a cleanly delivered vocal style, Gemma is a superb mouthpiece for the band's finely chiselled mix of metal, hard rock and classical-tinged influences. Despite the ambitious nature of certain selections – *Spite* and *Leave It All Behind* are nine and seven minutes long respectively – choruses are another key element of this band's appeal and the likes of *Insurrection*, *The Fallen* and the lighter-waving *Break The Silence* are bold, confident statements that leave

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a long-lasting memory. Watch them fly.

DAVE LING



Delain

THE HUMAN CONTRADICTION

| NAPALM |

Dutch symphonic rockers turn to their dark side

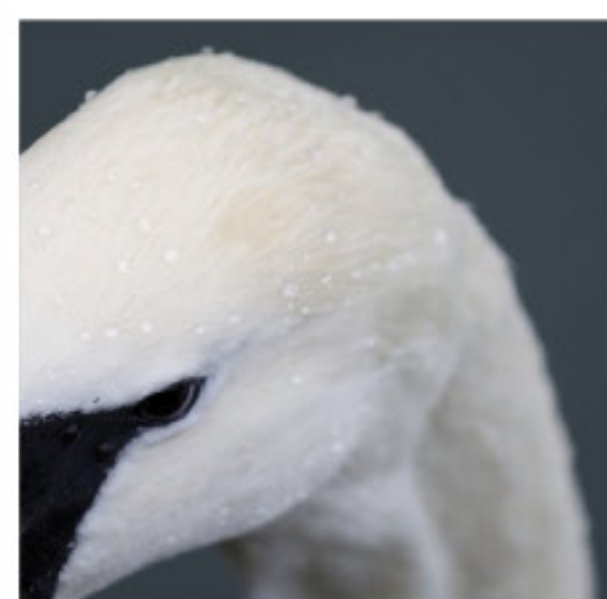
Eight years after the original release of the all-star debut *Lucidity*, Martijn Westerholt's dark symph-rock outfit have decided to retrace their more theatrical roots with this strong follow-up to the full-on *We Are The Others*. *The Human*

Contradiction is crammed with dramatic gothic metal and sweeping symphonic overtones but it's lyrically and musically far darker than its predecessor and 2009's *April Rain*. Taking its title from a post-apocalyptic novel – apparently one of frontwoman Charlotte Wessels' favourites – Delain's fourth album tip toes away from familiar ground with a more experimental sound that's been carefully mixed by Dream Evil's Fredrik Nordström (Arch Enemy/Opeth). There's a twist of Danny Elfman in the opener *Here Come The Vultures* and even an elegant duet with The Agonist's blue-haired screamer Alissa White-Gluz on *The Tragedy Of The Commons*. Add to that the brief return of former Orphanage grunter George Oosthoek and Nightwish's Marco Hietala, whose distinctive vocals entwine with Charlotte's on the power anthems *Your Body Is A Battleground* and *Sing To Me*, and Delain have cracked the winning combination

7

of the bitter-sweet symphony.

NATASHA SCHARF



Echoes

THE PURSUIT

| INVICTUS DISTRO |

Post-metallers search for their own voice

The problem with being labelled post-metal over a decade on from the likes of Isis and Cult Of Luna is that you face an enormous challenge to keep pushing the sonic envelope. Sometimes it's not possible. It'd be a lie to say that Echoes are the sound of the genre's re-invention but they do at least borrow from a few off-piste elements on this highly engrossing album. There's the occasional metalcore-ish gang vocal that won't shock but might make you raise an impressed eyebrow. Of course, despite a well-meaning attempt at finding their own voice, all the usual staples are here. Slow-burning, shimmering walls of guitar noise come crashing down as quickly as they were built methodically and drums sound as if they are vibrating at the Earth's core. It's been done before, in superior guises, but it fails to dampen Echoes' emotional impact and, if they carry on refusing to stick rigidly to an established formula, there could be something quite

6

wonderful coming in the future.

STEPHEN HILL

SMALL MERCIES

NEW BLOOD



Employed To Serve

CHANGE NOTHING, REGRET EVERYTHING

| HOLY ROAR |

This Woking band could benefit from better sound but the mathcore fretwork is exciting, and the duelling battles between the male and female screams are fun. Justine's vocals sound strained, though. [5]

NIK YOUNG



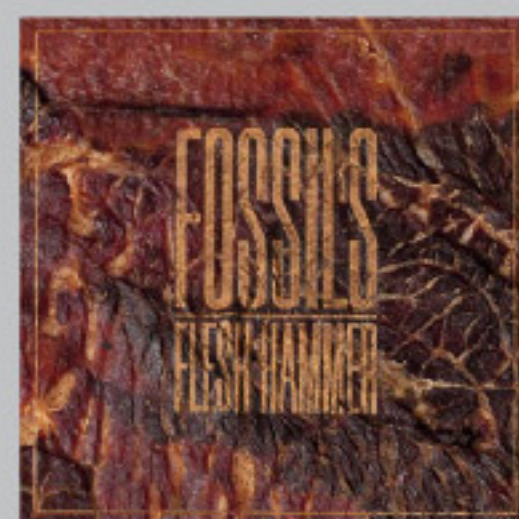
Flotsam And Jetsam

NO PLACE FOR DISGRACE 2014

| METAL BLADE |

Why have the US thrash veterans re-recorded their 1988 sophomore album? The original inevitably sounds dated but this version lacks character and oomph. [6]

GREG MOFFITT



Fossils

FLESH HAMMER

| INDISCIPLINARIAN |

There's a bit of Keelhauled to Fossils on the maturely named and terse *Flesh Hammer*. It's bracing instrumental, chaotic sludge, and, frankly, *Lard Obstacle* is a wonderful songtitle. [8]

DANIEL CAIRNS



Falling Red

EMPIRE OF THE DAMNED

| SELF-RELEASED |

British rockers remember to cram some songs into their glam

It may seem like rock'n'roll that isn't heavily cliché-ridden is a dying breed. With their second full-length, Falling Red are out to prove that's not the case – at least, not musically. While they may look like they need to stay away from open flames, it seems they spend as much time on their songs as they do their hair. The image may be reminiscent of a less cartoonish Black Veil Brides, but these boys have the ability to write refreshingly gritty hard rock that isn't verging on self-parody. Standout tracks such as the rousing *We Escaped A Cult*, *Outcast* and the excellent title track have chunky riffs and strong choruses working in their favour, with a vibe reminiscent of fellow Brit rockers Heaven's Basement, or The Defiled with clean vocals. It's a little rough around the edges in terms of production, especially in the vocals, which are a bit thin, but it's still enjoyable. That the album was entirely crowd-funded shows they already have a loyal fanbase; hopefully

things will only get better.
CATHERINE MORRIS



Floor

OBLATION

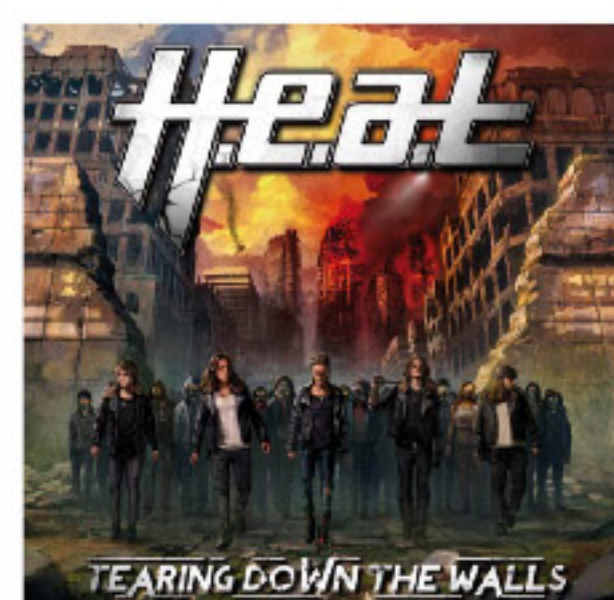
| SEASON OF MIST |

Torche mainman resurrects his former, elevated sludge glories

As a band who have split and reformed more frequently than they've released albums, even founder member Steve Brooks must've been erm... floored at the rapturous reception his Torche precursors received when they reconvened in 2010. So exponentially had their fanbase grown by then, it was enough to convince Steve to start writing new material. There's no

escaping the sonic parallels between Floor and Torche, largely thanks to Steve's canny ear for sweeping, enlivening vocal melodies and a more than liberal use of bowel-haemorrhaging brown-notes, but there was always something more ethereal and stripped back about Floor's approach. Largely thanks to some typically outstanding production work from Kurt Ballou, *Oblation* captures their sludgy melancholy perfectly. Like the *In Return* EP wrapped in 80s pop sensibilities, the likes of the title track or the eight-minute *Sign Of Aeth* might be like being slowly bludgeoned in the chest at the top of a mountain, but it's the comparatively subtler tracks such as the stuttering *Homecomings* and *Transitions* that elevate

them above being merely Torche Snr.
TOBY COOK



H.E.A.T

TEARING DOWN THE WALLS

| EARMUSIC |

Scandic glam princes get primed to take the throne

Picture the scene; H.E.A.T walk into a metal bar and the liggers stop to guffaw at their Topman tank tops and girly faces. By last orders the Swedes have stolen your girlfriend and have you hooked on Europe's greatest hits. Say what you want about 80s hair metal (although you should draw the line at bollock-baring Spandex) but catchy-as-fuck tunes that force your fists to punch the air like you're doing the YMCA on crack have a place, even in today's extreme and forward-thinking climate. *Tearing Down The Walls* is an album of hit after hit with every song sounding a bit like something you've heard before but can't put your finger

on it. The title track is pure Bon Jovi while other cuts hark back to Scorpions, Def Leppard et al. It's more than AOR; these are energy-fuelled, power-driven songs that beg for pyrotechnics made effortlessly clear in the explosive *Point Of No Return* and the über-anthem *A Shot At Redemption*. Of course, being Swedish, H.E.A.T have the song-writing gene inherent but they also play with glam and grit in equal measure.

8
HOLLY WRIGHT



Hirax

IMMORTAL LEGACY

| SPV/STEAMHAMMER |

Californian thrash originals still determined to leave their mark

While Hirax remain an obscure thrash name, they were pioneers of the Californian scene as contemporaries of Metallica and Slayer. Time and events may have left them behind, but if you crave uncomplicated, primal thrash, *Immortal Legacy* is a breath of musty, potent air. Led by vocalist Katon W De Pena, the last original member, they hit high-speed momentum on *Black Smoke* and scarcely let up. What makes this work is the communication between Katon, whose vocals are more in the power metal vein, and guitarist Lance Harrison, who matches brutal riffage with sophisticated solos. He even gets to show his softer leanings on the instrumental *Atlantis (Journey To Atlantis)*. The album moves along at a head-clanking rate but nothing ever sounds rushed or pushed too far. Quality songs like *Victims Of The Dead*, *Earthshaker* and *Deceiver* really bring back thoughts of thrash's 80s heyday; Hirax represent that spirit better than most of their peers.

7
MALCOLM DOME



Howard Jones is back, and in fine voice

DEVIL YOU KNOW

THE BEAUTY OF DESTRUCTION

| NUCLEAR BLAST |

Former Killswitch frontman relights his fire

With Jesse Leach's return to the fold, and Killswitch Engage's subsequent return to form, and the memory of his lacklustre final days in the band still lingering, it seems Howard Jones's stock has taken quite a plummet recently. It should, however, be noted that this is a man who fronted KSE during their commercial and, some *End Of Heartache* fans would argue, critical high point. So when the opening track, the aptly named *A New Beginning*, comes spewing out of your speakers on Howard's first post-Killswitch project in a barrage of thrashing guitars and pure, screaming aggression from the man himself it's hard to suppress a grin of the shit-eating variety. For all of Howard's apparent disinterest in the heavy stuff a few years back, any lingering fears that he would go soft are all but put to bed by the double-time stomp of the third track, *Embracing The Torture*. In fairness, *Devil You Know* are hardly stretching the boundaries of metalcore here, but with a weapon in their arsenal like Howard's patented roar turned soulful croon and the way the band utilise it in such fine style, expect *The Beauty Of*

Destruction to right a few misplaced truths about one of modern metal's best frontmen. He's on his way back.
STEPHEN HILL



READER REVIEW

CAN YOU OUTDO METAL HAMMER'S REVIEW CREW?



CYNIC | Kindly Bent To Free Us

| SEASON OF MIST |



When I last heard Cynic it was revisiting 1993's *Focus* in all its glory. Today, it's their latest effort, *Kindly Bent To Free Us*, that produces a post-Cynic sound, devoid of Paul Masvidal's heavier vocals and their more atmospheric riff-work now an almost intense yet tireless

approach. Cynic's artwork as always is borderline surrealistic, invoking a reverie. Their experimentation with vocals, 2008's *Traced In Air*, is now supplanted with chunkier basslines and prog/jazz-backed songwriting. Every song here creates an individual storyline, and Cynic infuse them with new depths.

Anway Pramanik Bangalore

7



EMMURE

ETERNAL ENEMIES

| VICTORY |

Frankie Palmieri keeps stirring on album six

A short, panic-inducing opener full of samples, sirens, a huge roar and immediately offensive lyrics gets *Eternal Enemies* off to an awesome start. Unsurprisingly, the title of this track, *Bring A Gun To School*, also caused a ton of debate online. Emmure are nothing if not controversial and, love or hate their blunt, often clichéd lyrics, they certainly command attention. Frankie Palmeri himself is amazing at delivering deep but well pronounced vocals and the mix of cocky rap, throaty roars and seriously hooky riffs is exhilarating. *N.I.A. (News In Arizona)* is massive and, with its futuristic twists, tortured tones and babies gurgling, might well be mistaken for a Korn collaboration. *The Hang Up* stays in theme too, adding a heavy bassline and snarling spoken word to the mix. Fans who hated *Felony*, when this band's rapcore turn really took hold, are unlikely to love this. That said, the death elements remain strong and this is a fierce album with some head-spinning fretwork and blisteringly heavy tracks like *Rat King* proving just how brutal Emmure can be. Sadly, the second half of this album does not live up to the first, and overly melodic *We Were Just Kids* makes for a weak closer.

NIK YOUNG



Last Album I Bought

ALEX SKOLNICK
Testament

{ VAN HALEN
Van Halen

"This record said to me:
a) There's another level of musicianship I'd been unaware of; b) You can still have a sense of humour; and c) Learn how to play lead guitar."



Lionize

JETPACK
SOUNDTRACK

| WEATHERMAKER MUSIC |
A mighty funk'n'roll rumble from the fringes of the US capital
Considering that Lionize are signed to Clutch's own record label, that *Jetpack Soundtrack* is co-produced by Clutch's Jean-Paul Gaster and that the Silver Spring, Maryland quartet will be hitting the UK in April with Neil Fallon's mob, it doesn't take a genius to deduct which band might provide their closest sonic reference. It's nigh-on impossible to listen to the rolling, bluesy funk of *Replaced By Machines* or the loose-limbed grooving of *Reality Check* and not hear echoes of their patrons' much-acclaimed latter-day sound, but it would be doing Lionize a grave disservice to label them merely as Clutch Jr. A band for 10 years, the quartet's consummate musicianship draws upon soul, funk and reggae influences in addition to riffing off Zeppelin and Deep Purple ideas, and the cowbell-heavy, punchy *Skynet* and the laidback, dub-infused *Sea Of Tranquility* offer proof of their quality, dexterity and diversity. Best get down early to those upcoming Clutch dates, then.

PAUL BRANNIGAN



Lost Society

TERROR HUNGRY

| NUCLEAR BLAST |
Mustaine megafans sally forth with their second outing
"What Would Dave Mustaine Do?" Surely this slogan was scrawled in tall, chunky black letters across the rehearsal studio whiteboard – the rallying cry for Lost Society's sophomore release and the Socratic answer to every question posed during its recording. "Should we speed up the tempo?" "What would Dave Mustaine do?" "Is this solo long enough?" "What would Dave

Mustaine do?" "Anybody need another beer?" ...Well, you get the picture. Lost Society's 2013 debut, *Fast Loud Death*, gleefully tapped into the boozy mayhem of old-school Bay Area thrash, watered down with unapologetically juvenile lyrics. Their sophomore outing, *Terror Hungry*, sees the Finnish quartet return for another bruising retro-thrash free-for-all, although what a difference a year makes. Ambitious song structures and cocksure musicianship set *Terror Hungry* miles apart from its predecessor. Like *Rust In Peace*-era Megadeth, *Terror Hungry* explodes with complex rhythmic salvos, blizzards of distorted riffage and dextrous fretboard heroics, as showcased in punishing speed limit-dusters like *Lethal Pleasure* and *Snowroad Blowout*. Although nobody's reinventing the wheel here, *Terror Hungry* is a hook-heavy beatdown that stands among the year's

7 better thrash outings to date.
JOE DALY



Metsatöll

KARJAJUHT

| SPINEFARM |
Estonian folk metallers march into a stone wall
Metsatöll, or 'Wolf' in their native Estonian, are award-winning folk metal heroes in their homeland, doubtless a sturdy footing upon which to unleash their sixth recording, the confidently titled *Karjajuht*, meaning 'Pack Leader'. *Kulmking* is a good first strike, a surprise attack that uses traditional Estonian instrumentation in a non-traditional way, as atonal strings add a unique edge to a well-trodden genre. It gives the track an off-kilter slant that works in its favour. The galloping thrash of *Lööme Mesti*, a song of brotherhood, keeps the pace going, replacing the standard guitar solo with bagpipes. It's a satisfying combination, and one that represents a template Metsatöll adhere to from here on in, melding unremarkable metal riffs with the unique melodies of well-placed folk instrumentation. There are moments of genuine excitement in tracks like *Surmamuur* and *Õõ*, but for the most part *Karjajuht* fights well within the borders of its own subgenre.

6 TOM COOKSEY

SMALL MERCIES

NEW BLOOD



Halestorm

REANIMATE 2.0:
THE COVERS EP

| ATLANTIC |
The second covers EP from Halestorm, this shows their ability to tackle Judas Priest, AC/DC, Marilyn Manson and Pat Benatar without losing individuality. Respectful, yet full of their own attitude. [7]
MALCOLM DOME



Hornets

NO FAITH

| SELF-RELEASED |
Hornets ply a trade in aggressive, groovy, hardcore-infused metal that shows real potential at times. There's a bit of Chimaira about them, actually. The vocalist sounds uncannily like Mark Hunter. [7]
DANIEL CAIRNS



Lucifer's Hammer

NIGHT SACRIFICE

| SHADOW KINGDOM |
These Chileans named themselves after the Warlord classic, but also show a knack for Agent Steel-like histrionics and some killer Dave Murray-esque guitar solos. A must for any serious 80s metal fanatic. [8]
ALASTAIR RIDDELL



Monsterworks

UNIVERSE

| EAT LEAD AND DIE |

London's progressive metallers navigate the big bang

A band that piles every style under the sun into one album either knows their shit or is on the path to destruction. Fortunately, Monsterworks are the former, and while *Universe* isn't entirely no-holds-barred there is a dizzying array of styles and atmospherics at play to make this an ambitious and erudite piece of work that hinges on a rich patchwork of soulful progressive sounds. From the mind-warp reverse-effect harmonies of the album's opening title track, to the maniacal taunt of *The Bridge* and the album's lingering hybrid of Swallow The Sun and 3 Inches Of Blood, *Universe* navigates its myriad influences with grace and subtlety. After two decades of ploughing metal's progressive undergrowth, Monsterworks have mastered the art of balancing extremity with soft nuances and mercurial guitars that erupt with Southern-style verve, which is simply enough to exhilarate besides their bold attempt to construct the album's concept around

7 the entire story of the universe.
HOLLY WRIGHT



More Than Life

WHAT'S LEFT OF ME

| HOLY ROAR |

Expressive hardcore crew keep faith on album number two

While Gallows were biting people's noses off and The Ghost Of A Thousand were kicking shit off with a more rock'n'roll brand of hardcore, More Than Life were an altogether grittier and emotionally harrowing proposition. Their *Love Let Me Go* album has been lauded

in cult circles and should be checked out by all who are recent converts to La Dispute, Planos Become The Teeth and their ilk, but *What's Left of Me* is a less sullen and morose offering than before. Adding pace and a more upbeat feel, it would be inaccurate to say this is entirely different beast – the passion and inescapable ability to make you feel, undoubtedly the band's defining characteristics, are still very much at the fore of the album – but this is definitely a bold step into new horizons for MTL. It's not every day that you can say a powerful hardcore band can channel the gothic noir of The Cure into their work.

8 Essential for fans of emotional hardcore.
TERRY BEZER



Mos Generator

ELECTRIC MOUNTAIN MAJESTY

| LISTENABLE |

Sabbath-infused veterans keep climbing the same path

With Sabbath-loving, blues-hued doom bands bubbling up from the bong water at a rate of knots, it's not enough any more just to have great riffs and good beards. Or is it? Imperially hirsute Port Orchard, Washington-based trio Mos Generator have been churning out Iommi-washed riffs and cultivating their facial topiary for nearly a decade and a half, with scarce deviation from Plan A continuing to yield incrementally better results – *Electric Mountain Majesty* perhaps being the zenith of that strategy. Awash with the sort of warm, ampli-fried tones that sound like *Deliverance*-era Corrosion Of Conformity jamming on old Cathedral numbers, tracks like the driving

opener *Beyond The Whip*, or the fuzz-laden and soulful *Neon Nightmare*, provide a fairly transitory gratification. But it's the more adventurous numbers that provide *Electric Mountain Majesty*'s most magisterially electrifying highs. From the oscillating, almost Monster Magnet-with-a-cello ride of *Enter The Fire* to the swampy harmonies of *Breaker* and the monolithic stomp of closer *Heavy Ritual*, Mos Generator

7 prove that you don't always need a Plan B.
TOBY COOK



Nexilva

ESCHATOLOGIES

| GHOST MUSIC |

Sunderland youngsters unleash a dizzying tech-metal debut

The conveyor belt of talented musicians being churned out by the tech-metal factory shows little sign of slowing down. Following a stint at Tech Fest that got tongues wagging, Nexilva have taken their first opportunity to demonstrate their skills to the masses. Those who enjoy blistering riffs and complex arrangements will find much to love on the likes of *Cybernetic Lucidity* and the chugging *Premonitions*, but their real pedigree is just how heavy they are. The likes of *The Misdirection Of God* crackle with scathing intensity, with the black metal opulence of lush keyboards giving a majestic grandiosity to the title track. The flamboyant ivory-tinkling also helps distinguish tracks from the murderous onslaught. Aside from the odd choice of having a three-part instrumental interlude, *Eschatologies* is

8 an inventive and exciting debut.
ADAM REES



Lacuna Coil: dressed for success

LACUNA COIL

BROKEN CROWN HALO

| CENTURY MEDIA |

Cristina and co remain at the top of their class

One thing Lacuna Coil are good at is being consistent. On *Broken Crown Halo*, the melodic Italian metallers deliver more of the razor-tongued, scornful tunes they're known for, while also delving into a darker, more cinematic soundscape than on 2012's *Dark Adrenaline* and the slickly polished *Shallow Life*. Straight away the synth sound the band favours can be heard, along with Cristiano Migliore and Marco Biazzi's gritty guitar tone. It's not a bad thing – it's just unmistakably Lacuna Coil. And, as ever, the jewel in the crown is the haunting, resonant voice of Cristina Scabbia. She delivers a stunning performance, especially in the powerful and emotional ascent of *Hostage To The Light*, but there are also frustrating moments on *Broken Crown Halo* where she seems to take the back seat to the frankly less gifted Andrea Ferro. The stomping, resolute album opener *Nothing Stands In Our Way* has gorgeous verses framing a rather monotonous chorus, while standout track *I Forgive* should really be a Cristina solo. While Andrea is the co-founder of the band, he serves their sound far better when he sticks

7 to harsh growls. Nevertheless, the songwriting is as classy and cool as ever, and won't disappoint fans.
CATHERINE MORRIS



PEER REVIEW

WHAT ARE OUR HEROES SAYING ABOUT EACH OTHER?



JOSH MIDDLETON

Sylosis

ARCHITECTS | Lost Forever... | EPITAPH

"I thought Architects' previous album, *Daybreaker*, was their best to date – after experiencing a very early midlife crisis on *The Here And Now*, which does actually have some great songs on it – but in my opinion this album surpasses the previous once again. *Lost Forever* // *Lost*

Together boasts some of their heaviest songs, production and vocal performances. *Gravedigger* is no doubt going to be a live favourite. The album covers everything Architects are known for: technicality, intensity, melody as well as ambience and

atmospherics. Like most stand-out bands, they don't fit neatly into any one genre but they stand head and shoulders above the majority of their peers."





Saying goodbye to Mitch in style

SUICIDE SILENCE THE MITCH LUCKER MEMORIAL SHOW

| CENTURY MEDIA |

Stars align to honour late firebrand frontman

This DVD isn't here to prove musical points, more as a document to show respect. It does manage to showcase two things, however: firstly, just why Suicide Silence were considered streets ahead of the deathcore pack and, secondly, just how integral Mitch Lucker, or any great vocalist to any band, was to their success. After a few shots of, and interviews with, an emotional crowd, the show begins with Job For A Cowboy's Jonny Davy kicking off the revolving vocalist spot in fine style. With so many singers there were always going to be peaks and troughs and some performers struggle to capture Mitch's special something, even with the quality of material behind them. Even established stars like Tim Lambesis and Chad Gray can't quite emulate his delivery. The good news is that new SS vocalist Eddie Hermida puts in a stirring shift on *Slaves To Substance* that bodes well for the new album. By the end, Robb Flynn's acoustic cover of Black Sabbath's *Die Young*, Max Cavalera smashing through *Roots Bloody*



Roots and a vicious Randy Blythe performance of *You Only Live Once* make this a fitting tribute to the man.

8

STEPHEN HILL

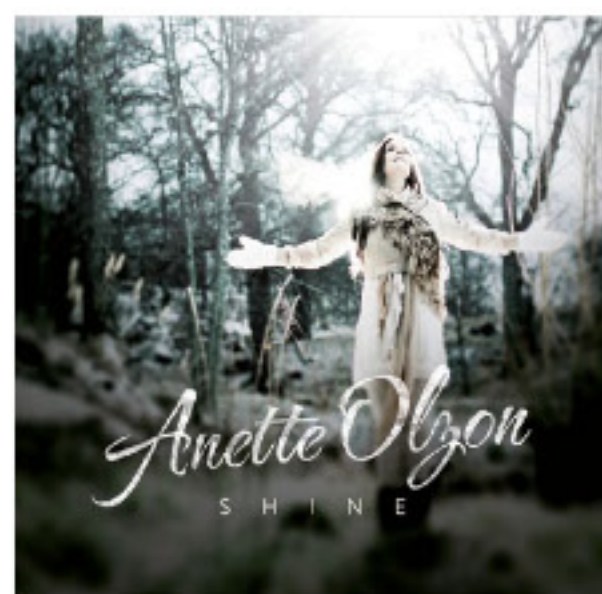
My Favourite Album Artwork

SCOTT LEWIS

Carnifex

DISSECTION
*Storm Of The
Lights Bane*

"The artist, Necrolord, did a lot of amazing covers and this one has been a favourite of mine for 15 years at least. Honourable mention is Cradle Of Filth's *Cruelty And The Beast*."



Anette Olzon

SHINE

| EARMUSIC |

Former Nightwish singer makes a bright new start

If Nightwish fans thought that *Imaginaerum* would be the last they ever saw of Anette Olzon, they needn't have worried. With her debut solo album, *Shine*, the Swedish singer closes one door and tentatively opens another, having resolutely made that bravest and most dangerous of decisions: to be herself. The result is an intensely personal record that could be easy to read as a diary of her turbulent life on the road, but really, it's Anette's chance to find her own voice as a songwriter. This is not a symphonic metal album; it's more like the hard rock she made with her first band, Alyson Avenue. The more experimental tracks *Like A Show* and *Shine* are definitely growers, but ultimately they're the most interesting. *Lies* is a classic power ballad, while the heavier *Falling* showcases the impressive vocal range she's famous for. But it's her ability to deliver a restrained yet emotive performance on the delicate, folksy *Moving Away* that's the most effective, making it one of the album's best songs and showcasing a talent for

7 songwriting that can surely only get better.
CATHERINE MORRIS



Omotai

FRESH HELL

| THE PATH LESS TRAVELLED |

Texan rockers leave their mark in the sludge/psych slipstream

Think Mastodon have become too radio-friendly? Lost it with Baroness after they sailed off in a ship made of pretension? Like Unsane? Then you could pick up far worse things this month than *Fresh Hell*. On Omotai's sophomore effort the Houston, Texas-hailing noise mongrels

brandish the same sort of dense, riff-follows-riff-follows-riff approach of *First-* and *Second-*era Baroness, yet deliver it not with sludgy undertones, but with the sort of control-on-the-verge-of-chaos that has always marked out Unsane. Tracks like opener *Get Your Dead Straight*, and the scabrous and angular *Laser Addict*, which somehow also manage to drift painfully into a warped moment of Kylesa-like psych metal, grapple both a palpable sense of unhinged danger and oddly infectious groove. Yet it's during the likes of the brilliantly titled *Giant Pygmy* or the comparatively straightforward closer *We Don't Have To Be Strangers* that see the quartet most successfully homogenise their heaviest and most disparate influences into a more cohesive, less Mastodon-y whole. Not particularly fresh, then, but certainly pretty fucking hellish.

TOBY COOK



Ringworm

HAMMER
OF THE WITCH

| RELAPSE |

Metallic hardcore mayhem from the wrecking grounds of Cleveland

Hammer Of The Witch offers all you need from one of today's most vicious metal-infused hardcore bands. With its irate yells, adrenaline-fuelled fretwork and head-spinning guitar solos, the currently streaming title track already shows what to expect of the rest of album – track after track of memorable hooks and powerful riffs that could keep a pit raging for days. Some of the more striking songs include *Psychic Vampire*, *Die Like A Pig* and *We'll Always Have The End*, but the bitesize *One Of Us Is Going To Have To Die* is glorious too, complete with a fierce opening that adds grisly layers to frontman Human Furnace's opening shouts and then slows things down in an homage to more straight-up hardcore. Formed in 1991, these guys have toured extensively and improve with each release. Produced by Ben Schigel (Chimaira, Walls Of Jericho), this will be Ringworm's first Relapse release and proves that their songwriting is now

8

totally in lock step with their brutality.
NIK YOUNG

SMALL MERCIES NEW BLOOD



Red Seas Fire

CONFRONTATION

| SELF-RELEASED |

Sprawling, technically astute goodness that ably rides the line between proficiency and emotional resonance. Fans of cerebral heaviness, big hooks and bigger riffing will be as happy as pigs in mud here. [8]

TOM DOYLE



Salem's Pot

...LURAR UT
DIG PÅ PRÄRIEN

| EASY RIDER |

These trashy occultists show you how much they really love Sabbath, Witchcraft and Weed with three of the fuzziest, elongated trips you've heard since Electric Wizard last conducted a Black Mass. [7]

TOM COCKSEY



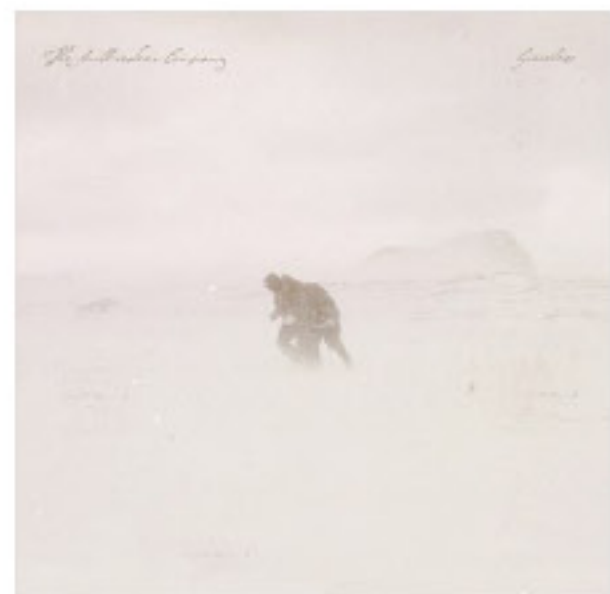
Set To Break

REDEMPTION

| SELF-RELEASED |

Welsh newcomers make a hell of a racket by combining deathcore, tech-metal and metallic hardcore and turning it up as far as it will humanly go. Brash, brutal, bordering on brilliant. [7]

STEPHEN HILL



The Soulbreaker Company

GRACELESS

| ALONE |

Intoxicating excursions from Basque psych-rockers

Part of a loose collection of Spanish-region psych and space rock bands that includes Rip KC, Cuzo and El Parámo, this Basque Country outfit has always been the earthiest of the bunch. Blues-infused and soulful – not least due to the uniquely nasal yet freeroaming vocals of Jony Moreno – their albums have become shot through with a bedazzled, dreamy wonder, as if the drugs are kicking in and kaleidoscopic colours are starting to seep out. *Graceless*, TSC's misleadingly titled third album, takes the band's journey one step further from the sturdy bluster of 2008's debut, *The Pink Alchemist*, and deeper into an autumnal yet still psychedelic hinterland. Opener *Many So Strange*'s nocturnal pulse, languid streaks of light and cool wafts of organ recall *In The Future*-era Black Mountain and the meticulous, intimate musicianship offers a shifting landscape for Jony's yearning, alpha-state excursions, where epiphanies seep into your consciousness and perform

acts of organic, transporting magic.
JONATHAN SELZER



Therion

ADULRUNA REDIVIVA AND BEYOND

| NUCLEAR BLAST |

Symphonic Swedes go to town on a triple-DVD extravaganza

This triple-disc DVD package is a work of quite staggering magnitude. Though conceived by guitarist Christofer Johnsson as a fairly rudimentary death metal outfit in 1987, Therion have spent a decade weaving orchestras and choirs into the

mix. A car crash of Christofer's scalding-hot trad metal licks and exotic operatic divas, its contents were filmed during a 20th anniversary tour in Budapest in 2007 and four years later at the ProgPower Festival in Atlanta. They include a complete revision of *Theli*, their album from 1996. To some *Theli* is a defining statement that Therion never managed to surpass, and, assisted by special guest Dan Swanö, the group's former producer, it still sounds fresh and inventive here.

An extra feature entitled *An Adventure With Therion* and a documentary were sadly unavailable to review at press time but, despite the overlap between the two shows, Therion

fans will gorge on these 47 tracks.
DAVE LING



Thine

DEAD CITY BLUEPRINT

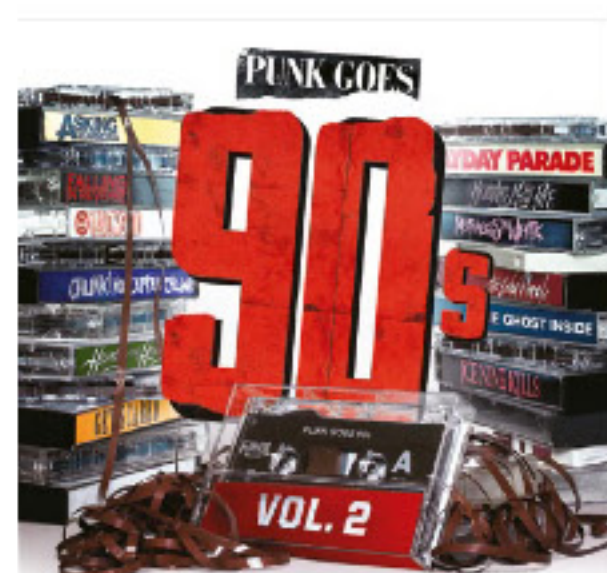
| PEACEVILLE |

West Yorkshire's progressive rockers refuse to rush

Thine don't exactly rush their recordings. They like to give their music time to percolate and organically grow, which is why their third album comes 12 years after *In Therapy*. The wait has been worth it. There are moments here that will have you reaching for your Paradise Lost or Anathema collections. Equally, they reach towards 70s cult prog heroes like Gentle Giant, as well into the wellsprings of Dream Theater and Cynic. But ultimately, Thine conjure up sounds and melodies that are very much their own. You can hear the sedate majesty on *Brave Young Assassin*, *Flame To The Oak* and the brilliantly

unpredictable *Out Of Your Mind And Into A Void*. Throughout, the five musicians lock together with an informality that leads to the feeling much of the music here has been created spontaneously. However, you also know there's a discipline and structure intricately worked out. The style is exhaustive, orchestral in a modern progressive metal style, yet also thoroughly absorbing. A darkly enticing work.

MALCOLM DOME



Various Artists

PUNK GOES 90s VOL.2

| FEARLESS |

Metalcore covers stuck firmly in the neutered zone

There are lots of awful things in the world right now: war, famine, Jim Davidson, but none of them are as bad as what awaits inside this steaming turd of a CD. It's an exercise in inanely refurbishing songs that were either really great first time around or best forgotten about entirely. Who in their right mind, for example, is listening to *Everlong* and going "I don't think Mr Grohl and co pulled off the definitive version of this, I'd love to hear The Color Morale mawl their way through it instead." Nobody, that's who. There are a couple of half-decent moments, The Ghost Inside (doing P.O.D.'s *Southtown*), Motionless In White (Rammstein's *Du Hast*) and Asking Alexandria (NIN's *Closer*) all put in passable displays, but it's the overwhelming tidal wave of diarrhoea sluicing into your ears that will get to you first. Kill the DJ who tries to play these songs at your local rock club 'for a laugh'.

TOM DOYLE



Therapy?: just what the doctor ordered

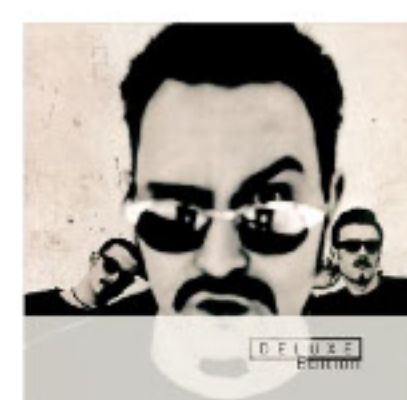
THERAPY? TROUBLEGUM/INFERNAL LOVE DELUXE REISSUES

| UMC/MERCURY |

Alt-metal heroes unearth two classics

While the word 'seminal' may be bandied around much too often these days, when it comes to **TROUBLEGUM** [9] and **INFERNAL LOVE** [9] by NI's Therapy?, the adjective couldn't be any more apt. Bursting with twisted lyrics wrapped around metal-infused, punk-imbued barbs, the former remains a much-adored, evergreen classic 20 years on from its release, while the brooding, beguiling latter is a bit like the Robert Downey Jr of the rock world – misunderstood and not quite what we were expecting at first, but now an entity that continues to get even more awesome with age. This month they receive the deluxe treatment and the remastered re-releases also feature a treasure trove of tasty treats for both collectors and newcomers alike. Stuffed with B-sides, live cuts and remixes from their respective eras, highlights include the stellar, standalone single *Opal Mantra* and *ShortSharpShock* EP favourite *Totally Random Man* (on the triple-disc *Troublegum* set) and the cowpunk-tastic *Our Love Must Die* (from the double-CD version of *Inferral Love*) and both editions are absolute must-haves in your record collection.

EDWIN McFEE



REVIEWED NEXT MONTH...



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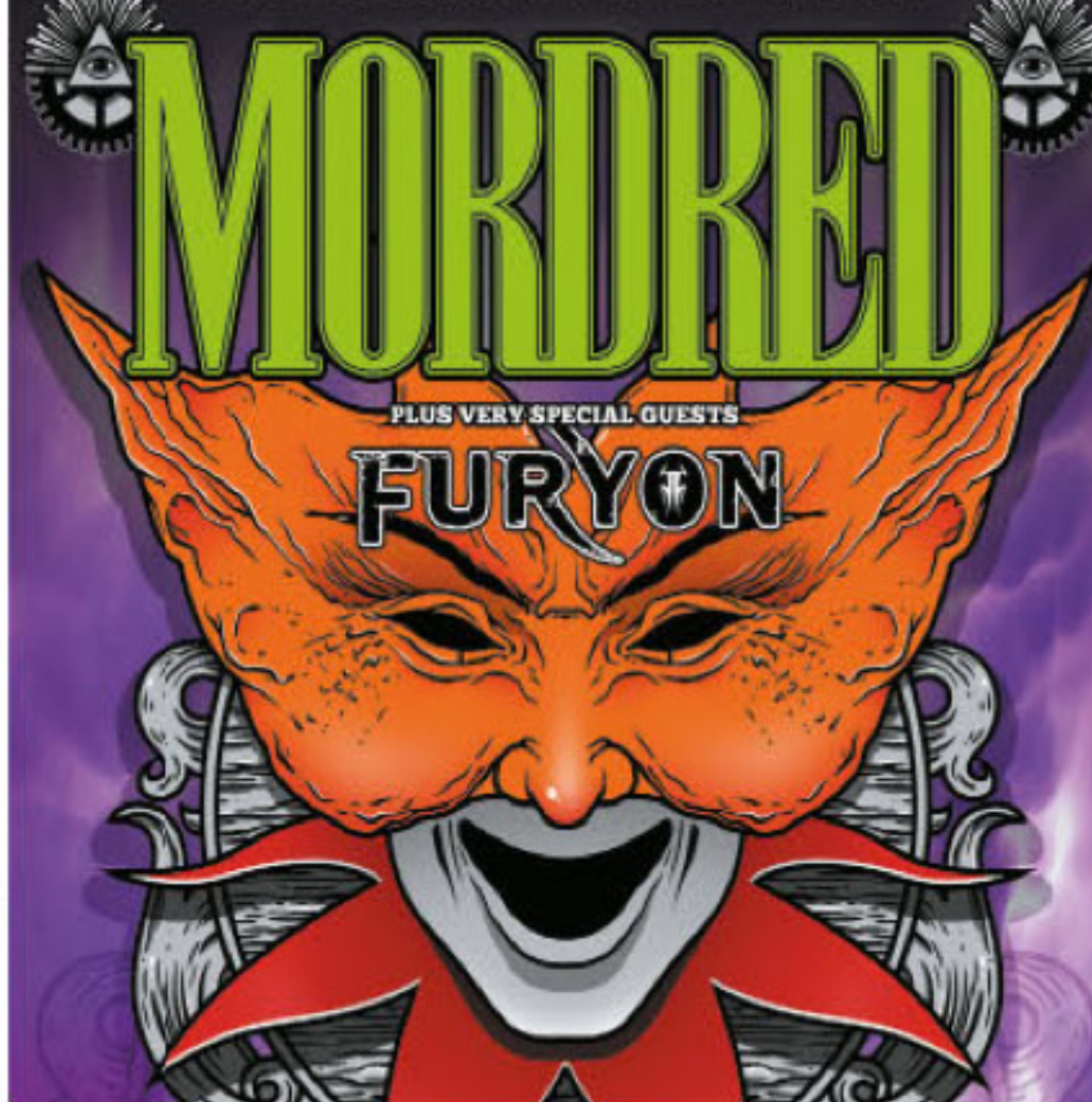
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5FDP's Ivan Moody sets
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SETLIST

AVENGED SEVENFOLD

Shepherd Of Fire
Critical Acclaim
Welcome To The Family
Hail To The King
Doing Time
Buried Alive
Fiction
Nightmare
Afterlife
Guitar Solo
Bat Country
Unholy Confessions



Suicide Silence:
back from the brink



Gwar's Oderus. Still single, oddly



Down's Pepper Keenan: Lifer



Alter Bridge's Myles shows off his impressive pipes



Black Veil Brides: married to the job



Testament's Chuck Billy: not bothered by the lack of strings on his 'guitar'

Although Soundwave is smaller this year than last due partly the fact that Metallica aren't playing, the calibre of punk and metal bands is still as excellent as it's always been. It's only 11am but a sizeable crowd has already gathered to greet **AMON AMARTH** [8]. Smoke billows from the mouth of the dragon head atop the Viking longboat onstage as the Swedes deliver a stirring set of fist-pumping death metal. Breaking in Stage Six (out of a whopping 12) is **HACKTIVIST** [8], who have packed the warehouse out on the strength of only one EP. Singers Timfy and J tell us the debut album is out later this year before they explode into their set highlight, a cover of Jay-Z & Kanye's *Niggas In Paris*. Today marks the first appearance of **MUSHROOMHEAD** [6] in Sydney and as they throw themselves into *Bwomp*, the diehards lose their shit, while onlookers appear nonplussed throughout. **ALTER BRIDGE** [7] deliver an impressive set crammed full of heavy riffage, slick solos and hooky choruses, especially during *Addicted To Pain* and *Cry Of Achilles*. Playing early in bright sunshine, **FIVE FINGER DEATH PUNCH** [7] bring a large, excited crowd to the front of the stage and produce some greats such as *Burn It Down*, and end with *The Bleeding* from *The Way Of The Fist*. Not having such a great day are prog-rockers **TESSERACT** [5] and neo-goth industrialists **THE DEFILED** [6]. Although the former are technically masterful, the melodic interludes lose the early afternoon masses while the latter play to a dwindling crowd. Not even the theatrics of The AvD throwing his keyboard in the air and performing on it upside down are enough to keep the stragglers hanging on. **ASKING ALEXANDRIA** [7] play their fiery, seven-song set simultaneously on the main stage to an adoring crowd. They continually interact with their fans, who lap up *Don't Pray For Me* and *The Death Of Me*. Swedish psych-rockers **GRAVEYARD** [8] are geared up to send the enthusiastic punters into a hair-

swinging, eyes-shut stupor. Recently on a major tour with Soundgarden, the band are tight, engaging and the set is over too quickly.

"We're your death metal representatives for today!" declares **THE BLACK DAHLIA MURDER**'s [8] Trevor Strnad, before the band commence bludgeoning the rabid crowd. As they bring their whirlwind assault to a brutal close, the vocalist quips "See you in Hell, Sydney!" and with the sun beating down on us, we do at least feel the heat. Opening with the anthemic *Rise Up*, **TESTAMENT** [7] are in fine form, despite the thin-sounding mix. Chuck Billy dedicates *Native Blood* to "all of my Native American brothers and indigenous Australians" before instigating a wall of death during the absolutely massive-sounding *The Formation Of Damnation*. You can always count on the wiry vocalist for hardcore punks **TRASH TALK** [8], Lee Spielman, to do his utmost to create as much disorder as humanly possible. Equipped with a ridiculously long mic lead, he spends much of their set out among the crowd, even ordering everyone to run outside

at one point. Chaos has never been so much fun.

Sporting matching three-piece suits, Texans **UPON A BURNING BODY** [8] take the award for best-dressed band of the day. The deathcore metallers also vie for the biggest circlepit of the day as vocalist

Despite their tragedy, Suicide Silence's future looks promising

Danny spits razorblades for *Intermission* and *Texas Blood Money*. It's beautiful carnage all around. No strangers to Australia, **AFI** [8] tackle the afternoon crowd with fun antics, crowdsurfing and a set that features a mixture of old and new.

PULLED APART BY HORSES [7] don't take themselves too seriously, with frontman Tom decked out a pair of pink shorts while cracking jokes and ordering fans to throw the 'Slipknot fingers' as they rip through *Back To The Fuck Yeah*. Thrashy alien metallers **GWAR** [9] appear to be delayed due to some issues onstage, but that doesn't deter the large crowd. They are

FACT

Last year's Soundwave had 'the drummer's curse' after five bands including Anthrax, Slayer and Six Feet Under had to replace their sticksmen.

THE GOSPEL LIVE



Alice In Chains' William DuVall makes a good fist of belting out the classics



Thy Art Is Murder play a safe set, thankfully

ROD HUNT

SETLIST

KORN

Falling Away From Me
Twist
Got The Life
Good God
Love & Meth
Spike In My Veins
Get Up!
Shoots And Ladders /
Somebody Someone
Coming Undone
Here To Stay
Never Never
Freak On A Leash
Blind

Rob Zombie: all hail the Devil Man!

blood, witnessing an effigy of the Australian Prime Minister, Tony Abbott, being beheaded, cheering as the royal baby is tossed about like a football, and gasping as Queen Elizabeth has her boobs lopped off.

Another first-timer to Australia, Danish rockers **VOLBEAT** [7] hit the stage with an electrifying mid-afternoon set. Taking the award for the happiest and most gracious band thus far, the four-piece declare that Australia has some of "the most beautiful women in the world", while playing a long version of Johnny Cash's *Ring Of Fire* and songs drawn from their five albums. **SATYRICON** [7] are simultaneously bleak and rousing, drawing on songs from their last four albums, including *Now Diabolical*, *Black Crow On A Tombstone*, *The Pentagram Burns* and *K.I.N.G.* That **FILTER** [7] haven't visited Australia in 12 years in part explains the enthusiastic response. All the 90s hits get a serving including the mellow point of the day, *Take A Picture*. Just as Richard Patrick announces their last song they get kicked off stage due to time constraints, so we're regrettably told there will be no *Welcome To The Fold*. Only 24 hours earlier, **THY ART IS MURDER** [7] had been given the Soundwave boot after apparently encouraging punters to rush the stage and attack security personnel at the Brisbane date. Reinstated since, today they draw a large crowd, along with a heavy police presence. The

soon soaked with fake

Australian deathcore outfit are undeniably vicious and powerful, but the only thing the police have to deal with this time is a fan who emerges from the pit sporting a bloody nose. English hardcore punk crew **YOUR DEMISE** [6] follow directly on and struggle to keep the crowd in the room. Even though this is one of their last shows ever, it's a disappointing experience. Although grizzled alt-rockers at the adjacent stage awaiting Alice In Chains

Phil Anselmo smashes his forehead with the mic until the blood flows

are glaring with increasing disdain, the poppy metalcore of **A DAY TO REMEMBER** [7] is welcomed with the glee of a teenager first discovering online porn. Singalongs aside, the enthusiasm peaks when vocalist Jeremy McKinnon crowdsurfs in a clear blow-up ball.

Plagued by sound problems, **TRIVIUM** [6] aren't quite hitting their groove, although the sea of punters don't seem bothered.

The overpowering drums seem to outweigh Matt Heafy's vocals but they still play an impressive set and *Strife* gets the masses pumped. **BLACK VEIL BRIDES** [6]

give their rabid fans exactly what they want with a burst of hits, poses, riffs and solos. **CLUTCH** [8] rarely play a dud gig and this early evening set is no exception. Singer

Neil Fallon is commanding and *Earth Rocker*, *Wolfman* and *Electric Worry* are highlights of a set that is unfortunately cut short due to Filter not finishing on time.

Back on the main stage at sunset, **ALICE IN CHAINS** [7] saunter onto the stage and the acclaimed rockers warm up the eager crowd with two songs off *The Devil Put Dinosaurs Here*. Ploughing into classics, they end with singalong hits including *Would?* and *Rooster*. In front of a small but appreciative crowd, **BARONESS** [7] begin with the light and shade of *Green Theme*, before kicking into the heavy rock of *Take My Bones Away*. The close connection between the four band members emits from the stage, though it's not their strongest live showing. Consisting of Kaoss pads and loops over layered riffs Chino Moreno's new band **†††** [7] are the most musically diverse

of the day. They sound great live and Chino puts on a hell of a show, proving why he's one of the best around. Even Korn's Head is spotted watching them from side of stage.

Just over a year ago, Californian deathcore titans **SUICIDE SILENCE** [7] lost their beloved frontman Mitch in a bike accident. Soundwave marks their return, featuring new guy Hernan 'Eddie' Hermida. Opening with *Unanswered*, they unleash a windmilling all-out assault. By the time they're locked into *Disengage*, Hernan has incited a bone-crushing wall of death, making his acceptance by their fans complete. Despite such a tragedy, the band's future looks very promising. **SKINDRED**'s [8] fervent crowd receive the band's unique musical fusion with loads of crowdsurfing and circlepits, ending with *Ninja*. Their fans enthusiastically chant for more but there are no encores at Soundwave, it seems.



Philip Anselmo bleeds for metal

FACT

The Perth leg for Soundwave had to be relocated outside the city due to conflicts with the council. It will not be held there again.



Mastodon's Troy Sanders, playing with Neil Fallon and full of impish glee



Gojira bring their Gallic Godzilla-sized riffs



Howard Jones's Devil You Know struggle to follow the Devil Man

In front of an enormous crowd, **KORN [7]** play their new single *Spike In My Veins* to a backdrop of Justin Bieber and Miley Cyrus (we assume it's critical). Early tracks such as *Good God*, *Shoots And Ladders* and *Got The Life* get an amazing reception but as soon as the Skrillex-collaborated *Get Up* starts eyebrows are raised and the masses slowly start dwindling. **DOWN [9]** attract a large and raucous crowd. Philip Anselmo dedicates *Lifer* to Dimebag and Jeff Hanneman, smashing his forehead with the mic until the blood flows. Their epic finale, *Bury Me In Smoke*, leaves everyone with a smile on their face as Satyr and Frost from Satyricon and others join them for a jam.

TERROR [7] are as tough-sounding and uncompromising as ever, with vocalist Scott Vogel never satisfied unless the pit in front of him is a constantly seething mass of bodies. The crowd happily obliges. **GOJIRA [9]** hammer home what an amazing and intense live band they are, with older favourites like the neck-snapping *Flying Whales* and *The Heaviest Matter of the Universe*, along with the title track from *L'Enfant Sauvage*.

Long-running post-hardcore outfit **GLASSJAW [7]** play to a sizeable and fanatical audience. The band lean more towards their heavier material tonight, but also mix it up with the likes of the infectiously melodic *Ape Dos Mil*. "Guys, reach down and grab that ass," is how **MOTIONLESS IN WHITE's [6]** Chris Motionless introduces *Synthetic Love*. On *If It's Dead, We'll Kill It* he makes a point of telling us how it's one of the heaviest songs they've ever written, instead

of letting it speak for itself. 'Contrived' is the word that comes to mind.

ROB ZOMBIE [9] may not be impressed by the 7.15pm sunset slot, but he's not to let a trivial thing like the sun get him down. The band charge through *Living Dead Girl*, a cover of Diamond Head's *Am I Evil?* and the ever-popular *Dragula*, and giant balloons are thrown into the crowd for good measure. Rob and co have upped the theatrics spectacle for the day, and indeed the genre. It's hard to follow up such a spectacle as **DEVIL YOU KNOW [7]** find out, playing

Korn play Spike In My Veins to a backdrop of Justin Bieber and Miley Cyrus

directly after on the adjacent stage to only a smattering of people. As much as Howard Jones rampages through a brutal set, it's not enough for the bystanders to stay put. Despite recent attempts to modernise their sound, time has not been kind to nu metal B-teamers **ILL NIÑO [5]**. With the stage running behind schedule a crop of diehards stick around for their fill, but to the majority it feels not so

much tired as utterly exhausted. **DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN [9]** stop the audience in their tracks, at least for a few moments, with the intensity of opener *Prancer*. Greg Puciato conducts the set with his powerful vocals while

climbing the two speaker stacks and scaffolding and running out into the pit. **LET LIVE [6]** frontman Jason Aalon thrashes around on Stage Six inciting a riot of one. He jumps off amps, drags the drum riser to the front of stage with high hats falling over and empties a bottle of water in which he tries to recreate a slip-and-slide onstage. As you do.

Despite competing with major drawcards elsewhere, reconvened metalcore heroes **I KILLED THE PROM QUEEN [6]** don't appear fazed. Having persevered through several personnel changes, the likes of *Say Goodbye* indicate the pit ninjas are simply pleased they're still an ongoing proposition. Award for most impressive stage production of the day goes to **AVENGED SEVENFOLD [9]**, who look like they're performing in a medieval castle, equipped with shrines, gothic sculptures and fire. Lots of fire. There's hardly any banter but the guys prove why they're arena rock royalty.

MASTODON's [8] set is heavily weighted towards *The Hunter*. They also treat us to some old favourites and their final song for the night is a killer take on *Blood And Thunder* featuring none other than Neil Fallon of Clutch. **HIM [6]** play to a ferociously loyal crowd. Ville Valo gives it all but the band aren't as tight as they can be; the curious non-diehards retreat elsewhere. Headliners **GREEN DAY [5]** have

a loyal audience but their pop punk doesn't go over well compared to the rest of the day. Originally scheduled to play for three hours, the band shave off 20 minutes on either side and there's plenty of 'wacky' interludes, including Men At Work's *Who Can It Be Now?* When they play *Redundant* and *Brain Stew* they're in top form, but it's too little too late.

Nevertheless Soundwave proves to be a truly world-class event. Roll on 2015!

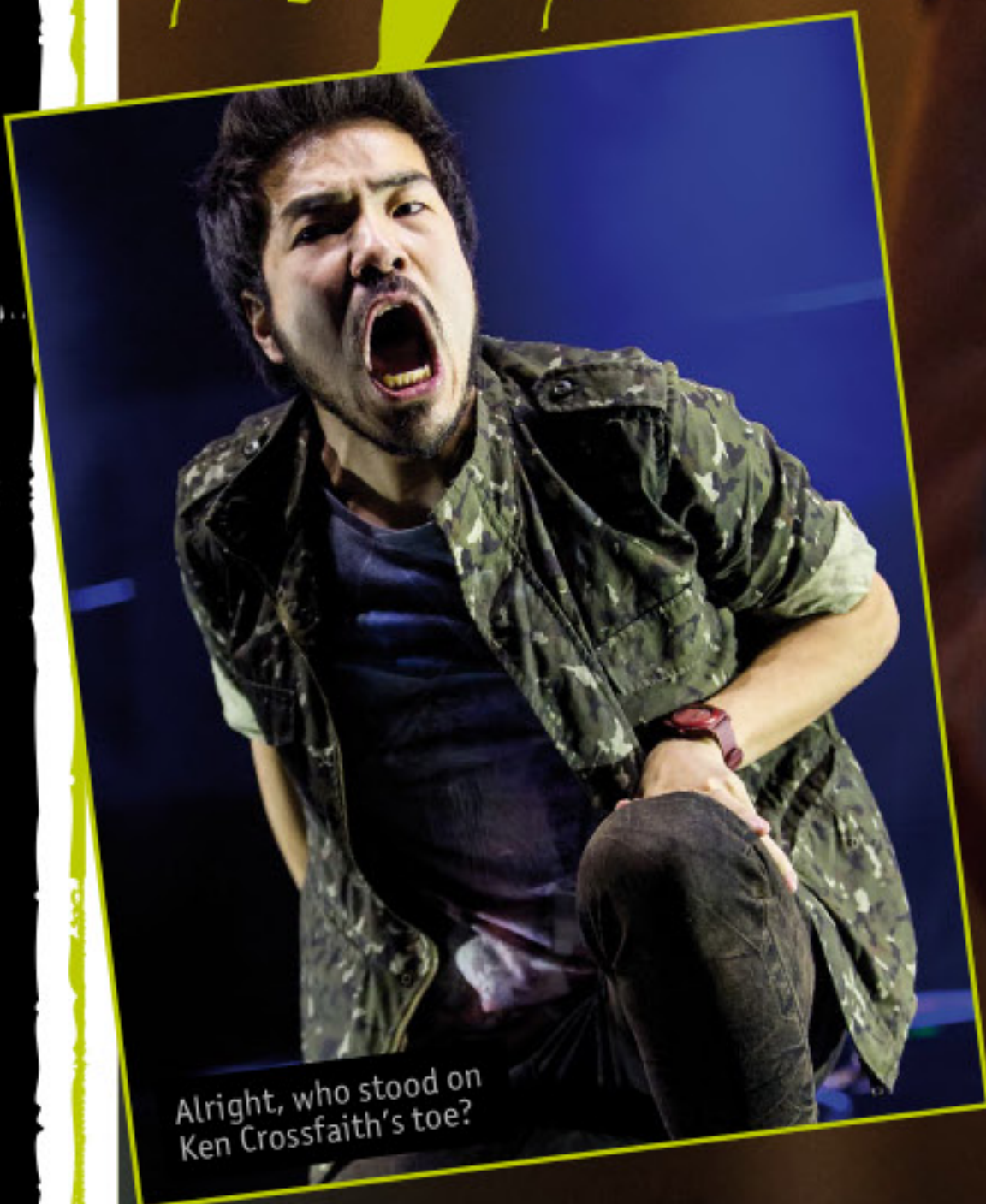
BRENDAN CRABB/ROD HUNT/MONIKA LACKMANN/JAMES MARALLICH

Prepare for festival front row antics by standing near a Labrador after a bath



Korn's Jonathan Davis gets upset when you say you don't like Skrillex

THE
GORE!
LIVE



Alright, who stood on Ken Crossfaith's toe?

LIMP BIZKIT

CROSSFAITH/NEKROGOBLIKON/ BABY GODZILLA

BRIXTON ACADEMY, LONDON

Fred Durst and co cover too much ground

BABY GODZILLA [7] can't possibly have envisioned opening up bills like this so early into their career. Brixton's cavernous walls swallow up any hopes of a decent sound for the stage-smashing Midlands crew, but they still provide enough of a spectacle to keep jaws nailed to the floor, with various members throwing themselves into the fast-filling Academy crowd with typical recklessness. A brilliant and barmy live band no doubt, just not quite for this calibre of venue. **NEKROGOBLIKON's** [5] people deserve a gold fucking medal for landing them this spot. Yes, the sight of a short guy in a convincing goblin costume running around is amusing for a half a song or so, and you really can't fault the guys' enthusiasm, but the fact is that, musically, this band are just not good enough to pull off a gimmick this flimsy. **CROSSFAITH** [8], though, are without a shadow of a doubt, one of the best live bands in the world right now, and tonight they prove it once again. Last year's *Apocalyze* album did not quite

match the merits of the invincible *Zion* EP, but in tracks like *We Are The Future* and *Eclipse* they have yet more certified firecrackers in their arsenal, and it's difficult to recall a support band at Brixton getting such a mega reaction in the recent past.

Speaking of mega reactions, is there a band in existence capable of sparking scenes of bedlam like **LIMP BIZKIT** [7]? Since their triumphant return at Download 2009, they've become the UK's party band of choice, and they're on wicked form once again tonight. This, in turn, makes it all the more frustrating that they choose to throw in enough covers to fill up what feels like a good third of the set. Surprises are great and all, but do we really need to see Fred Durst trying to screech his way through *Welcome To The Jungle* or *Heart-Shaped Box*? Bizkit have one of the best catalogue of anthems in metal, so when the audience are asked to then choose between *Boiler* and *Nookie* near the end of the set, it's hard to not get a tad annoyed. Still, when they hit the mark – will *Break Stuff* ever not cause the roof to nearly cave in? – they still absolutely smash it. See you in the summer, lads. Just think about leaving the covers at home next time, yeah?

MERLIN ALDERSLADE



Wes Borland overestimated the British weather

SETLIST

9 Teen 90 Nine
Welcome To The Jungle
Rollin'
Faith
Gold Cobra
Hot Dog
Master Of Puppets
My Generation
Livin' It Up
My Way
Heart-Shaped Box/
Smells Like Teen Spirit
Nookie
Ready To Go
Take A Look Around
Break Stuff

FACT

George Michael reportedly hates Limp Bizkit's take on *Faith*. *Three Dollar Bill, Yall\$* producer Ross Robinson tried to dissuade them from using it.

Centiment

Borderline, London

Tonight is Centiment's second-ever show. This should go some way to explaining why the people aware of this fact, and in attendance tonight, are shaking their heads in equal measures shock and awe, because no band should be this tight, focused and fully formed after 200 gigs, let alone two. Pedigree they may have – three-fifths of them have been in the industry over a decade as alt-rockers InMe – but you just don't expect a band to pull off an hour-long headlining performance of this quality in such an absurdly short space of time. Not only are Centiment tight in an almost telepathic way, their sound is crystal clear from the word go. They deal out thudding, stomping groove metal, laced in electronica and with the odd flourish of tech-metal and sprinkled with magic dust by vocalist Dave McPherson. His vocal range is possibly the evening's most impressive aspect, as he flips between guttural growls and falsetto wails. It may be only two-thirds full in the tiny Borderline but it feels like Centiment should be playing Brixton already. Two shows into their career and they may have already peaked.

8

STEPHEN HILL

We Came As Romans

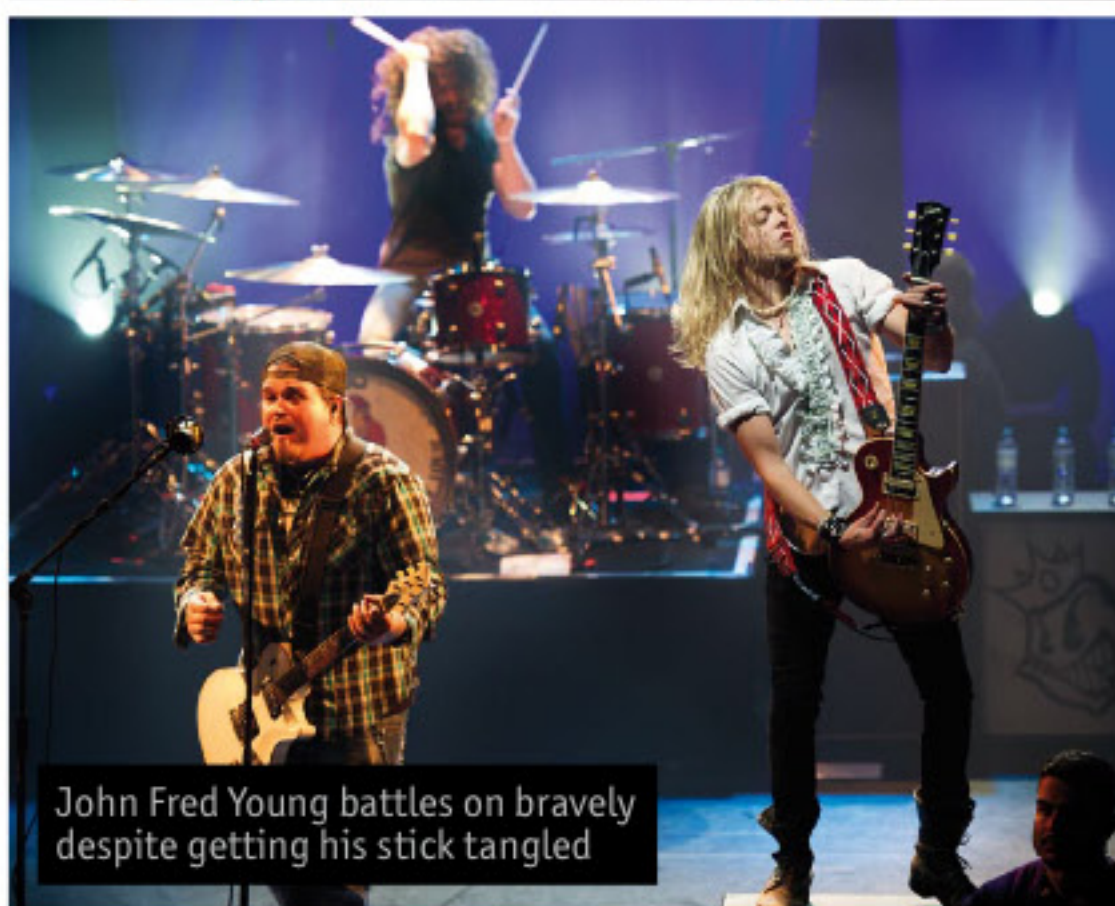
Islington Academy, London

Like a decent pint of Guinness, good things come to those who wait and We Came As Romans have long been waiting for tonight: their biggest-ever headline London show. Rushing onstage in a blur of double-bass blasts and strobes, the energetic metalcore crew lean toward *Tracing Back Roots* material and turn the sweaty crowd into a bear pit. There's shouts from the crowd of "This shit's gonna kick off!" before the band dive into *I Survive*, leaving fans and band flailing around like toddlers on a sherbet binge. Whether it's their cover of The Wanted's *Glad You Came* or The Color Morale's Garret Rapp joining on vocals for *Present, Future And Past*, it's one memorable party-popping set. The clean and harsh vocals from Dave Stephens and Kyle Pavone are tighter than a gnat's arse and the bombastic instrumentals rattle the rafters. As the night ends with the crowdsurfers finding their calling during *To Plant A Seed* and bassist Andy Glass halfway to the back of the venue for *Hope*, it's a

7

serious step up for a band destined for bigger stages.
LUKE MORTON

Chris Robertson: the cap is just a placeholder for Skynyrd's crown



John Fred Young battles on bravely despite getting his stick tangled

BLACK STONE CHERRY

KOKO, LONDON

Southern rockers get personal with the fans

Kentucky's favourite sons are back for a special intimate show, complete with fan-requested setlist and Q&A sessions, and unsurprisingly the touts are doing a brisk trade. For those lucky enough to gain entry a genuine treat awaits. Over a little short of two lively, fun-filled hours the four-piece remind us why they are heirs to a Southern rock crown still held by Lynyrd Skynyrd (indeed, Skynyrd have reached this same conclusion). Their sound is a magnificent take on Southern themes balanced on wide-tread tyres. The choruses of *In My Blood*, *White Trash Millionaire* and *Blame It On The Boom Boom* are so huge they have their own postcodes. Besides rarely performed tunes, we get to hear two excellent-sounding selections from the forthcoming fourth album, *Magic Mountain*. The Q&As are a bit of a waste of time as no one can hear what people are shouting out, but Koko roars with laughter when, having been asked "What cowbell do you use?" drummer John Fred Young replies, "The one off my cow!" Before going onstage BSC had been handed silver discs for sales of their previous album, *Between The Devil & The Deep Blue Sea* – and before departing the band promise "some big fuckin' shows in the autumn". Don't miss them.

9

DAVE LING



Idiom's Matt Sharland whips up a frenzy



Rise To Remain's Austin Dickinson is welcomed back with open arms

RISE TO REMAIN

IDIOM/ CHAPTERS

BORDERLINE, LONDON

Metalcore firebrands get back in the saddle

Tonight is a night for the return of absent friends and **CHAPTERS [5]** give it all they've got despite 10 months away from the stage. Sadly, their labyrinthine prog metal is let down by some anaemic drumming and an under-practised feel, although they clearly have the kernel of something exciting to build on. Considerably more developed are Exeter's **IDIOM [7]**, who bring to mind both Cancer Bats and Rage Against The Machine during a set of slash'n'burn. Mainman Matt Sharland's ability to take a crowd of beery civilians and whip them into a frenzy is truly impressive. **RISE TO REMAIN [8]**'s considerable time away has been spent penning the follow-up to 2011's *City Of Vultures* but from the moment they step up this evening it's clear that they've been aching to get back into the live arena. "Did you miss us, London?" asks an animated Austin Dickinson as the crowd lose their collective minds, and the band detonate their slick-as-an-oiled-up-otter metalcore. Tunes like *We Will Last Forever* and *The Serpent* are a timely reminder of just what this lot are capable of on their day – full bore, impassioned and remorselessly catchy. Based on this showing, the boys are well and truly back in town.

TOM DOYLE

THE
GOSPEL
LIVE



Amon Amarth: doing it for ships and giggles

AMON AMARTH

ENSLAVED/SKELETONWITCH

WILTERN THEATRE, LOS ANGELES

Viking marauders party on in Vinland

All good things must come to an end and this evening marks the ceremonial finale of Amon Amarth's sprawling Deceiver Of The Gods North American tour. This headlining campaign represents a coronation of sorts for the Swedes, and promoters have commemorated the occasion by wheeling in the Most Metal Cake Ever backstage – a jaw-dropping replica of Amon Amarth's legendary smoke-breathing longship sailing through a sea of fire, complete with confectionery versions of the five musicians.

Before a sliver is cut, however, there's work to do and it's down to **SKELETONWITCH** [8] to kick it all off. The Ohio blackened thrash crew enjoy heroic status in the US due largely to the no-bullshit attack of their live shows and tonight they deliver an aggressively paced 30-minute firestorm of scorching riffage. Their tourmates observe the time-honoured tradition of end-of-tour hijinks by interrupting the set to casually stroll across the stage clad in tinfoil hats and orange wigs. Moments later – sans wigs

– **ENSLAVED** [8] take over with thunderous opener, *Death In The Eyes Of Dawn*, weaving ethereal textures and descending harmonies into thick barrages of corrugated black metal hooks. In a delicious turnaround, Amon Amarth frontman Johan Hegg interrupts their set to dispense sturdy shots of booze to each of the band before allowing them to continue.

Logistics prevented **AMON AMARTH** [9] from taking their iconic longship on the road, but tonight the sight of the ship's imperious green eyes cutting through the darkness sends the audience into wild raptures. Diving into *Father Of The Wolf*, followed by *Deceiver Of The Gods*, the Swedes establish that this will be a high-energy affair, with Johan repeatedly dashing onto the bow of the ship and urging the crowd to "Have some fucking fun!" Classics like *As Loke Falls*, *Shape Shifter* and closer *The Pursuit Of Vikings* translate enormously well live amid a blizzard of duelling fretwork and the rhythmic shelling of drummer Fredrik Andersson. As the lights come on, the notoriously fickle LA crowd are thoroughly conquered, and while tonight marks the end of the tour, it's clear that a historic new chapter for Amon Amarth has just begun.

JOE DALY

The ship's imperious green eyes sends the audience into wild raptures

Johan Hegg: roar is the answer

SETLIST

Father Of The Wolf
Deceiver Of The Gods
Death In Fire
For Victory Or Death
As Loke Falls
Coming Of The Tide
Runes To My Memory
Varyags Of Miklagard
The Last Stand Of Frej
Guardians Of Asgaard
Shape Shifter
Warriors Of The North
Destroyer Of The Universe
Cry Of The Black Birds
War Of The Gods

ENCORE

Twilight Of The Thunder God
The Pursuit Of Vikings

FACT

The techniques that went into making a longship, as far back as 1,000 years ago, as well as many physical characteristics, are still used in Scandic boat-building.

Martin Walkyier's Viking Funeral

Isington Academy, London

Days before this gig, conceived by Skyclad's Martin Walkyier to raise funds for Cancer Research, events had descended into a shambles. Elevenking, who were going to be Martin's backing band, have pulled out and the bill of five bands has shrunk to three. **SECOND RATE ANGELS [5]**'s melodic thrash with clean and growled vocals is disjointed but the crowd is responsive. **EXUMER [7]** are back in the UK after 26 years and the Teutonic approach has changed little (except the hairstyles). A refreshed Martin introduces the final act, with an expletive-peppered diatribe against politicians, bankers and Elvenking. Luckily, **M:PIRE OF EVIL [7]**, featuring two ex-Venom members, save the day with a skull-crushing display of metal that mixes tasty Venom standards with their own tunes – a smart move. Martin returns to leads the band through a final trio of Venom bowel-looseners – *Black Metal*, *Countess Bathory* and *Witching Hour* – to conclude a night of supremely captivating entertainment, albeit often for the wrong reasons.

DAVE LING

Hounds

Barfly, London

There's something about gigs on Thursdays. You can drink, but not too much – no one wants to be hungover on Friday and not go out partying. That being said, Hounds have stormed into London on a mission to get feet moving and pints pouring. They enter the Barfly to an ear-piercing siren and the crowd are stunned into submission by their grinding guitars and mechanical noise. Having seemingly been brought up on a diet of Rammstein and horror movies, the four-piece "from the middle of fucking nowhere" pull up hoods and stick on the strobes as this tiny room becomes a dystopian goff rave, to the confusion of some punters. Admittedly, headline act The Red Paintings' abject art-rock weirdness is a far cry from these Rob Zombie-esque industro-punks. Ending on a cover of Ministry's *Stigmata* that more than holds up to scrutiny and the infectious catchiness of *The Wicked Witch*, a now almost-full venue is captivated by these inked-up bouncy bastards. It might not be their best

performance, but these dogs can still learn new tricks.

LUKE MORTON



THE DEFILED BUTCHER BABIES

KING TUT'S GLASGOW

London metal crew leap over the border

It's not like we're waxing about fine wines but as key support to homegrown heroes The Defiled, **BUTCHER BABIES [8]** are certainly an inspired choice. Spearheaded by Heidi Shepherd and Carla Harvey, they may be the only band that can match the onstage intensity and destructive aesthetics of our headliners tonight, and they do exactly that, ploughing their way through barbed blasts such as *I Smell A Massacre*, *National Bloody Anthem* and *Axe Wound*, setting the stage perfectly for the main event. To see the debauchorous grins on band and disciples alike as **THE DEFILED [9]** kick seven shades of shit out of King Tut's, it's a mystery how this small Glasgow venue can even house the six heaving monsters onstage. Beginning with the double-barrelled blast of *Sleeper* and *As I Drown* from last year's *Daggers*, the sold-out crowd are quite simply putty in their hands as this group of rampaging miscreants, led by the vocal double team of Stitch D and The AvD, bat audio bombs into the air that explode in a melee of rapturous singalongs and flat-out pitting. They rarely take their foot off the gas and as the final notes of *Call To Arms* fade, there's little doubt that everyone present will savour these fresh memories, as it seems highly likely that this will be the last tour of tiny venues that these guys will ever do.

RYAN DREVER



SOULFLY SAVAGE MESSIAH

ISLINGTON ACADEMY, LONDON

Max Cavallera puts his mojo into full effect

While superficially cut from the same cloth as the headliners, **SAVAGE MESSIAH's [6]** homage to old-school thrash is a world away from Soulfly's tribal attack. Despite having done previous tours justice, they don't quite stimulate a crowd who only really care about seeing Cavallera and co. But rescued by a clear resolve to entertain no matter what, their set ends on a sweaty high note. Batting against some stupendous recent shows by Sepultura and speculations that 'they're not like they used to be' **SOULFLY [8]** are still unequivocally The Shit. Max Cavallera seems to have a new lease of life, foregoing his hobo-in-an-anorak look for an energised mutherfucker in a Nails t-shirt approach. *Bloodshed* sets the rabid masses ablaze, with Marc Rizzo churning out innovative riffs and licks, while *Prophecy* is like a rain of bullets and *Back To The Primitive* turns the floor into a beer-drenched trampoline. The Seps songs are manifestly winners and *Territory* takes the prize for all-out primal force, like a treadmill of unadulterated fury. Iggor Cavallera's appearance on drum for *Roots Bloody Roots* is undoubtedly a highlight and whether or not you think Soulfly have lost that spirit of abandonment in favour of a slicker, more polished incarnation, they're still in a different league to most other bands out there.

HOLLY WRIGHT

THE
GOSPEL
LIVE

James LaBrie realises
he's still got two hours
left to go

DREAM THEATER

WEMBLEY ARENA, LONDON

Prog metal masters extend their appeal

For Dream Theater, their aptly named 2011 album *A Dramatic Turn Of Events* was more successful than the band could possibly have hoped. Debuting without Mike Portnoy on drums brought a first Grammy nomination and the arrival of newcomer Mike Mangini helping to transform DT into what singer James LaBrie has called "a more free-thinking, positive-spirited, camaraderie-based band than it's ever been." But how would they fare after the honeymoon period? Last year's self-titled 12th album wasn't as universally popular as its predecessor but tonight at Wembley it's business as usual for the US/Canadian prog-metal behemoth, now headlining this place for a fourth time. Sure, a small section of the venue is curtained off but this remains the perfect setting for Dream Theater's masterclass in arena rock presentation. This is not a concert for the fainthearted or casual fan. They play for a whopping two and three-quarter hours, many of their songs lasting for eight, nine or, in the case of the new record's, five-part

Illumination Theory, 22 minutes. However, for all of the group's jaw-dropping musical expertise there's also melody and another of the new album's defining moments, *Along For The Ride*, sternly rebukes those who say that Dream Theater cannot do short, commercial songs.

It really is a beautifully presented show, with cinematic back projections, lasers and, best of all, amazing, pinpoint-sharp sound. If someone dropped a plectrum, you'd have heard it – quite a feat at a cattle shed like Wembley.

The set is broken down into two halves, the first of which being based upon new material. During its second portion they focus on the *Awake* album, which is now 20 years old, using an encore to revisit a large chunk of their celebrated conceptual piece *Metropolis Pt 2: Scenes From A Memory*, itself now a decade and a half old. During a 15-minute interval, the video screens show a variety of hilarious spoof adverts, doctored video footage and goofy crank calls that suggest that despite their muso-geekiness, though they hide it well, Dream Theater do have a sense of humour after all.

DAVE LING

SETLIST

The Enemy Inside
The Shattered Fortress
On The Backs Of Angels
The Looking Glass
Trial Of Tears
Enigma Machine
Along For The Ride
Breaking All Illusions
The Mirror
Lie
Lifting Shadows Off
A Dream
Scarred
Space-Dye Vest
Illumination Theory

ENCORE

Overture 1928
Strange Déjà Vu
The Dance Of Eternity
Finally Free



Jordan Rudess hits
the right note



John Petrucci adds
some more strings
to his bow



Mike Mangini:
lovely bit of kit

FACT

During the *Awake* tour in 1994/5, James LaBrie contracted violent food poisoning that ruptured his vocal cords and affected his ability to sing.

Blackberry Smoke

Islington Academy, London

You can't doubt this band's authenticity. They take their cues from Skynyrd, Blackfoot and The Allman Brothers, developing these with confidence and musical dexterity. It's clearly making a mark, because the place is packed and flowing with real enthusiasm. But while they're enjoyable and impressive, there's something lacking. Blackberry Smoke have none of the larger-than-life personality that made the likes of Skynyrd so unforgettable. Frontman Charles Starr is too low-key to whip up the crowd into a frenzy – and the fans are clearly ready to go wild. This is the only piece of the jigsaw missing, but it is an important one if the 'Smoke are to progress in the same way as, say, Rival Sons, whose career trajectory the quintet appear to be following in the UK. But there are moments of true inspiration, such as *Six Ways To Sunday* – probably the band's best song so far – and the extended jam-style presentation of *Sleeping Dogs*, while the *One Horse Town* is intimately ebullient. This is a band capable of

making an impact, but they just need charisma.
7 MALCOLM DOME

Cauldron

VOLTURE/AMULET/ TOLEDO STEEL

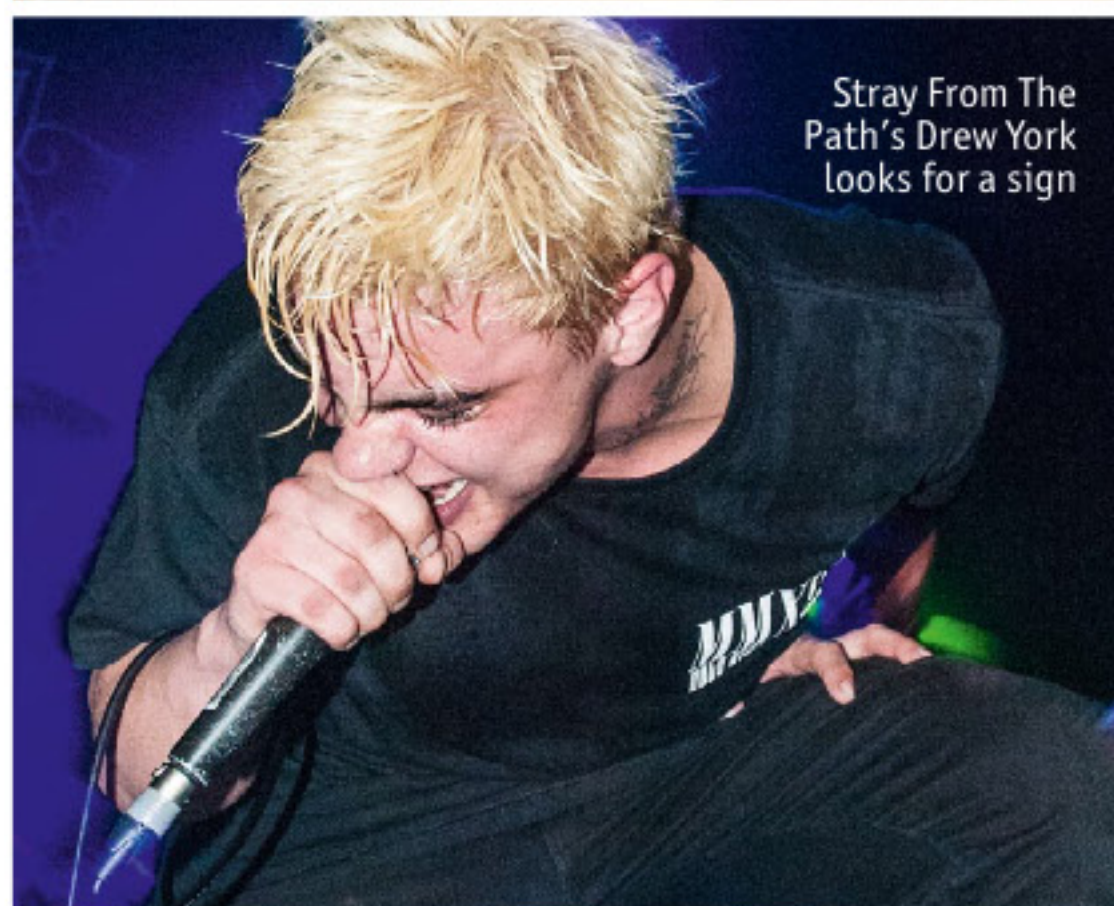
Birthday's, London

Heavy metal is alive and well in Dalston tonight and while **TOLEDO STEEL** [6] suffer slightly from the curse of songs that don't seem to go anywhere, they're still having a rocking good time. **AMULET** [7] ramp up the fun and their short, punchy tracks are completely on point. They bring on a balaclava-clad chap who stalks the stage and waves his noose in the air (not a euphemism) to, you guessed it, a song called *Hangman* and while a little cheesy, the band can be forgiven for such japes. **VOLTURE** [8] continue to revel in the glory of heavy metal with a rollicking version of Weapon's *Set The Stage Alight* and close on a massive rendition of *Brethren Of The Coast* from last year's incredibly rowdy *On The Edge*. All this is the perfect lead-in to **CAULDRON** [6] yet the band never seem to step it up. Insulting your audience before you play even a note is not the best of approaches and the band seem flat for much of their set. It's disappointing for many and it seems the band have yet to figure out that fine line between acting like rock stars and just plain being a dick.

CHERYL CARTER



Architects: Sam Carter fans the flames – with a fan



Stray From The Path's Drew York looks for a sign

ARCHITECTS

STRAY FROM THE PATH/ NORTHLANE

THE HAUNT, BRIGHTON

Revived firebrands host a homecoming

Charged with supporting a band whose sails are billowing with the wind of impending triumph, you'd expect **NORTHLANE** [5] to put a bit more effort in. The Australians are enjoying a significant buzz of their own, but tonight their metalcore-tinged tech assault fails to connect, the band's half-hearted performance amounting to little more than a damp djent squib. In contrast, New York's **STRAY FROM THE PATH** [8] are plainly hellbent on flattening noses and shredding eardrums. Part fire-breathing hardcore, part rap-metal swagger, they're a blur of attitude and energy, ensuring that sharp-elbowed anthems like *Radio* turn The Haunt into a swarming sweatbox. Everything seems to be coming together for **ARCHITECTS** [9] right now. Tonight they celebrate the release of their new album by delivering an exhilarating display of belief and belligerence. Older songs like *Follow The Water* explode with renewed vitality, but it's material from *Lost Forever//Lost Together* that inflicts the most damage, as Sam Carter covers every inch of the stage, mesmerised by his comrades' precise, passionate performance. Three years ago, Architects dropped the ball. Tonight that same ball is slammed into the back of the net with viciousness and vim. The dream lives.

DOM LAWSON



Dripback return to the wild



Kirk Windstein tunes into ass-kicking mode

CROWBAR

HANG THE BASTARD/ DRIPBACK

GARAGE, LONDON

NOLA bruisers lay waste to North London

If there was any question of whether or not Crowbar's crowd were going to like **DRIPBACK**'s [7] caustic modern death-inflected racket, it only takes a couple of savage aural assaults to allay any such fears, setting about the crowd as if they want to fight every single one of them. **HANG THE BASTARD** [7] distil the spirit of 70s rock through the filter of late-90s sludge. There is more than a little Iron Monkey going on in their dirty doom blues and raw, glass-gargling vocals, but they do it well. "I've got some good news for you, and some bad news," says gravel-throated bruiser Kirk Windstein. "The good news is we are **CROWBAR** [9] from New Orleans and the bad news is we're gonna kick your ass!" He's as good as his word, too. Unleashing waves of tarpit riffing, the band are heavier than a busload full of elephants but as *All I Have I Gave* and sludge anthem *Planets Collide* prove, the sonic density is wrapped in a melodic sense of 70s metal classicism, like an avalanche you can sing along to. They've been doing it for 25 years and frankly they remain the best: simple, no frills, just bearded men laying waste to all around. By the end of the night it could well be that everyone is smiling, but it's hard to tell under all that facial hair, both the band's and the crowd's.

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WITHIN TEMPTATION

THE DUTCH METAL MASTERS GEAR UP FOR WEMBLEY ARENA.

WT recently played a rare acoustic set in London and it seemed to go pretty well!

Robert Westerholt, guitar: "I think the songs sound pretty good acoustically and still hold their character in that totally different setting. I think it also has to do with that we firstly write most songs using acoustic guitars or piano. If a song is special, it should grab you when stripped back like that."

What made you decide to do that?

"Especially for radio shows and places with limited space and technical facilities, it's the only way to go. On our latest tours, we have played some songs acoustically and stripped down in our normal set. It gives a nice break in a full-power show and also brings the band and audience closer to each other."

Why did you do it in the UK in particular?

"The opportunity was there with our new album coming out

that week and we like to do those gigs once in a while!"

And Wembley Arena should be a very different kind of show, right?

"Oh yeah, it's going to be full blast, giving all we have! Besides the usual badass sound, light and video system, we'll have a brand new, nuclear-powered, hand-welded iron stage setup, 3D-printed decor, dragons and lots of fire. Lots and lots of fire!"

What's the first thing that goes in your band's rider?

"Beer for the crew and band and red wine for Sharon, ha ha! Life and happiness can be uncomplicated sometimes."

What bands are there you'd like to see WT tour with?

"Hmm, there are so many possibilities, but at the moment I'm listening to a lot of Alter Bridge when I'm in the car, so they would be a nice one to tour with, I guess!"

AMARANTHE

APR 5 LONDON O2 ISLINGTON ACADEMY
APR 9 WOLVERHAMPTON SLADE ROOMS
APR 11 NOTTINGHAM RESCUE ROOMS

AMON AMARTH

AUG 10 BLOODSTOCK FESTIVAL
AUG 12 BELFAST LIMELIGHT
AUG 13 DUBLIN ACADEMY

ASKING ALEXANDRIA

OCT 22 NORWICH UEA
OCT 23 NOTTINGHAM ROCK CITY
OCT 24 NEWCASTLE O2 ACADEMY
OCT 26 EDINBURGH PICTURE HOUSE
OCT 27 GLASGOW BARROWLAND
OCT 28 BELFAST ULSTER HALL
OCT 29 DUBLIN OLYMPIA
OCT 31 MANCHESTER ACADEMY
NOV 1 LEEDS O2 ACADEMY
NOV 2 CARDIFF GREAT HALL
NOV 4 BRISTOL O2 ACADEMY
NOV 5 SOUTHAMPTON O2 GUILDHALL
NOV 6 LONDON ROUNDHOUSE
NOV 7 BIRMINGHAM O2 ACADEMY
NOV 9 BRIGHTON DOME

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AUG 7-10 DERBY CATTON HALL

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MAY 10 LONDON VARIOUS VENUES

BORN OF OSIRIS, AFTER THE BURIAL, BETRAYING THE MARTYRS, BURIED IN VERONA

MAY 12 SOUTHAMPTON JOINERS
MAY 13 GLASGOW G2
MAY 14 MANCHESTER SOUND CONTROL
MAY 15 LONDON O2 ISLINGTON ACADEMY
MAY 16 LEEDS UNIVERSITY MINE BAR

BRING ME THE HORIZON

DEC 5 LONDON WEMBLEY ARENA

BURY TOMORROW

MAY 21 STOKE SUGARMILL
MAY 22 EDINBURGH STUDIO 24
MAY 23 LIVERPOOL ACADEMY 2
MAY 28 OXFORD ACADEMY 2
MAY 29 CARDIFF SOLUS 2
MAY 30 PLYMOUTH WHITE RABBIT
MAY 31 KINGSTON PEEL
JUN 1 KINGSTON PEEL

CALLING FESTIVAL 2014 AEROSMITH, JOE BONAMASSA, THUNDER, WALKING PAPERS

JUNE 28 LONDON CLAPHAM COMMON

CLUTCH

APR 22 NEWCASTLE O2 ACADEMY
APR 23 LEEDS METROPOLITAN
APR 24 MANCHESTER ACADEMY
APR 29 BIRMINGHAM O2 ACADEMY
APR 30 BRIGHTON CONCORDE 2
MAY 1 LONDON FORUM
MAY 3 BRISTOL TEMPLES FESTIVAL
MAY 6 EDINBURGH LIQUID ROOM
MAY 7 GLASGOW ABC
MAY 8 BELFAST LIMELIGHT
MAY 9 DUBLIN ACADEMY

DEATHSTARS

NOV 2 BRISTOL THEKLA
NOV 3 MANCHESTER ACADEMY 3
NOV 4 GLASGOW CATHOUSE
NOV 5 NEWCASTLE ACADEMY 2
NOV 6 WOLVERHAMPTON SLADE ROOMS
FEB 7 LONDON GARAGE

HAMMER-SPONSORED DESERTFEST 2014 KVELERTAK, BORIS, SPIRIT CARAVAN, WEEDEATER, CHURCH OF MISERY + MORE

APR 25-27 LONDON VARIOUS VENUES

DEVILDRIVER, SYLOSIS, BLEED FROM WITHIN

APR 3 CARDIFF SOLUS
APR 4 LONDON ELECTRIC BALLROOM
APR 5 WOLVERHAMPTON WULFRUN HALL
APR 6 GLASGOW GARAGE
APR 8 DUBLIN ACADEMY
APR 9 MANCHESTER ACADEMY 2
APR 10 SOUTHAMPTON MO CLUB

DORO

MAY 19 LONDON O2 ISLINGTON ACADEMY

HAMMER-SPONSORED DOWNLOAD FESTIVAL 2014 AVENGED SEVENFOLD, LINKIN PARK, AEROSMITH, ROB ZOMBIE, ALTER BRIDGE, OPETH, ROB ZOMBIE, STEEL PANTHER, KILLSWITCH, ENGAGE, BLS + MORE

JUNE 13-15 DONINGTON CASTLE DONINGTON



LIVE EVIL

EDGUY

SEP 12 MANCHESTER SOUND CONTROL
SEP 13 NUNEATON QUEENS HALL
SEP 14 LONDON O2 ISLINGTON ACADEMY

FEED THE RHINO THE HOWLING

MAY 1 BRIGHTON AUDIO
MAY 2 BATH MOLES
MAY 3 OXFORD O2 ACADEMY 2
MAY 8 NOTTINGHAM BASEMENT

MAY 9 CARLISLE BRICKYARD

MAY 10 LEICESTER O2 ACADEMY

MAY 15 PETERBOROUGH MET LOUNGE

MAY 16 FOLKESTONE QUARTERHOUSE

FIVE FINGER DEATH PUNCH UPON A BURNING BODY

MAR 30 LONDON FORUM
MAR 31 LONDON FORUM
APR 1 MANCHESTER ACADEMY
APR 3 GLASGOW ACADEMY

FUNERAL FOR A FRIEND BOYSETSFIRE

APR 25 LONDON O2 ISLINGTON ACADEMY
APR 26 LEEDS COCKPIT
APR 27 CARDIFF UNI SOLUS 2

HALESTORM DAYSHELL

APR 1 NEWCASTLE O2 ACADEMY
APR 3 SHEFFIELD O2 ACADEMY
APR 4 MANCHESTER ACADEMY
APR 5 BIRMINGHAM O2 ACADEMY
APR 7 BIRMINGHAM O2 ACADEMY
APR 8 BRISTOL O2 ACADEMY
APR 9 LONDON FORUM

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APRIL 27 MANCHESTER RITZ

KATATONIA

MAY 16 LONDON UNION CHAPEL;
MAY 17 LEEDS BRUDENELL SOCIAL

KORN HACKTIVIST

MAY 2 LONDON O2 BRIXTON ACADEMY

KVELERTAK

APRIL 17 SHEFFIELD CORPORATION
APR 18 LEEDS COCKPIT 2
APR 21 MANCHESTER ACADEMY 3
APR 22 GLASGOW CATHOUSE
APR 23 WOLVERHAMPTON SLADE ROOMS
APR 26 LONDON DESERTFEST

NINE INCH NAILS COLD CAVE

MAY 18 BIRMINGHAM LG ARENA
MAY 20 GLASGOW HYDRO
MAY 21 CARDIFF MOTORPOINT ARENA
MAY 23 LONDON O2 ARENA
MAY 24 NOTTINGHAM CAPITAL FM ARENA
MAY 25 MANCHESTER PHONES 4U ARENA

OF MICE & MEN ISSUES BEARTOOTH

APR 16 SOUTHAMPTON MO CLUB
APR 18 LONDON KOKO
APR 19 MANCHESTER RITZ
APR 20 GLASGOW O2 ABC
APR 22 BIRMINGHAM INSTITUTE
APR 23 CARDIFF GREAT HALL

PEARL JAM

JUL 8 LEEDS ARENA
JUL 11 MILTON KEYNES BOWL

PRONG

APR 1 GLASGOW CATHOUSE
APR 2 MANCHESTER SOUND CONTROL
APR 3 WOLVERHAMPTON SLADE ROOMS

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JULY 4-6 KNEBWORTH KNEBWORTH PARK

THE WILDHEARTS VON HERTZEN BROTHERS

APR 8 WOLVERHAMPTON WULFRUN HALL
APR 9 BRISTOL O2 ACADEMY
APR 10 MANCHESTER O2 ACADEMY
APR 12 NOTTINGHAM ROCK CITY
APR 13 NEWCASTLE ACADEMY
APR 14 GLASGOW ABC
APR 16 CAMBRIDGE JUNCTION
APR 17 LONDON ELECTRIC BALLROOM

WITHIN TEMPTATION DELAIN

APR 11 MANCHESTER APOLLO
APR 12 LONDON WEMBLEY ARENA
APR 14 NEWCASTLE O2 ACADEMY
APR 15 GLASGOW O2 ACADEMY
APR 16 BIRMINGHAM O2 ACADEMY



DORO

THE HEAVY METAL QUEEN RETURNS!

This London date represents a very special occasion for you, right?

"We are celebrating our 30th anniversary! It feels great, but I almost can't believe it. I still feel like I just started, like a kid in a candy store. It's been a privilege to get to know all these great people – Priest, Saxon, Motörhead, Maiden. It's been really good to have bands that you can learn from and look up to. I remember when we started, someone said, 'Judas Priest have been doing it for seven years.' It felt like an eternity back then, and now, 30 years later, I'm still totally enjoying it! I'm really glad that I gave up my day job!"

What are your favourite memories from your first UK gigs?

"I remember that on our first tour we were playing the legendary Marquee in London, and that was the very first time that I was given a gift by a fan. His name was Dave. It was so hot and sweaty in the club, and at the end of the show, he gave me a little black box, and when I opened it up it was a golden ring with a little heart. I'll never forget that – and sometimes he comes to visit me in Germany!"

That's pretty intense!

"Ja! I remember that back then the punk feeling was in the air,

and everyone was jumping and pogoing and dancing and bleeding. That's what I loved about the 80s – you could really have a good time because there were no rules. You could stagedive more, and pretty much go crazy."

You must have some traditions when it comes to playing in London. What do you get up to before hitting the stage?

"Oh yes! I would actually say that the UK has the coolest rock clothes. A long time ago I used to always go to Camden Market in London. I'd always be on the lookout for more bulletbelts – not that I don't have enough – but you can't fly with them anymore. I think that England and London has this great look that you can't get anywhere else."

And what kind of things do you bring out with you on tour these days?

"The only thing you need is a good attitude, to do whatever it takes to make the fans happy! Also there's my black leather vest and pants – actually I don't wear real leather any more, but my fake leather still looks cool. But yeah, it's about the attitude. Make it the best show ever, and I really learnt that from the best. Oh, and me being a girl, maybe a little makeup!"

SUBTERRANEA

GOING UNDERGROUND



GODFLESH LOOP

JUN 3 LEEDS COCKPIT
JUN 4-5 LONDON HEAVEN

GORGOROTH VITAL REMAINS

APR 2 CARDIFF THE GLOBE
APR 3 MANCHESTER SOUND CONTROL
APR 4 DUBLIN VOODOO LOUNGE
APR 5 GLASGOW AUDIO
APR 6 LONDON GARAGE

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APR 16-19 OSLO ROCKEFELLER/JOHN DEE

MESSENGER

APR 2 LONDON BIRTHDAYS

MYSTIFIER BOLZER CRUCIAMENTUM ZOM

JUN 7 LONDON DOME

NEGURA BUNGET

APR 2 DUBLIN VOODOO LOUNGE
APR 3 LIMERICK DOLAN'S WAREHOUSE
APR 4 BELFAST VOODOO
APR 5 EDINBURGH BANNERMANS
APR 6 GLASGOW AUDIO
APR 7 NEWCASTLE TRILLIANS
APR 8 BILSTON THE ROBIN 2
APR 10 LONDON UPSTAIRS AT THE GARAGE
APR 11 NORWICH WATERFRONT

OLD MAN GLOOM BOSSK

APR 3 LONDON SCALA

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Plainview

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Cambion
Overthrow

Sun 20 Apr
HAKEN
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Tue 22 Apr
HANDS LIKE HOUSES

Sun 4 May
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Jo Quail

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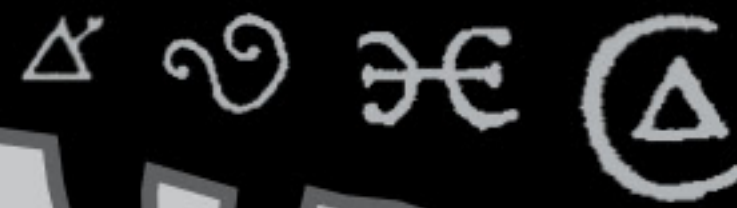
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SUBTERRANEA



"DEMONS, SIN AND SECRETS... HOW CAN THAT NOT BE ENTICING TO A NEW GENERATION?"

COVEN

OCCULT ROCK'S FIRST LADY RETURNS

MESSENGER

LOSS, LIFE AND SONIC LIBERATION

DREAD SOVEREIGN

ALAN NEMTHEANGA MEETS HIS DOOM

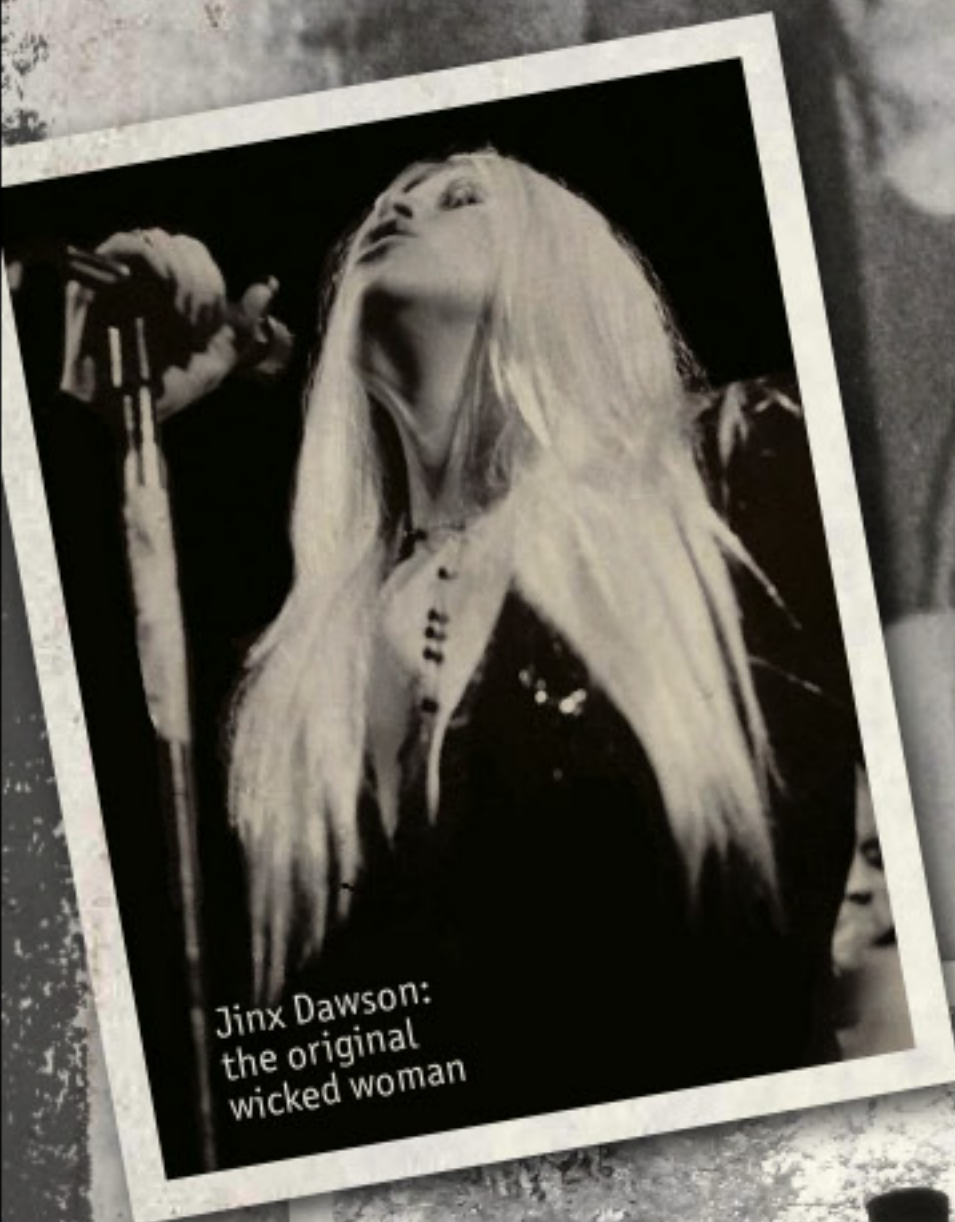
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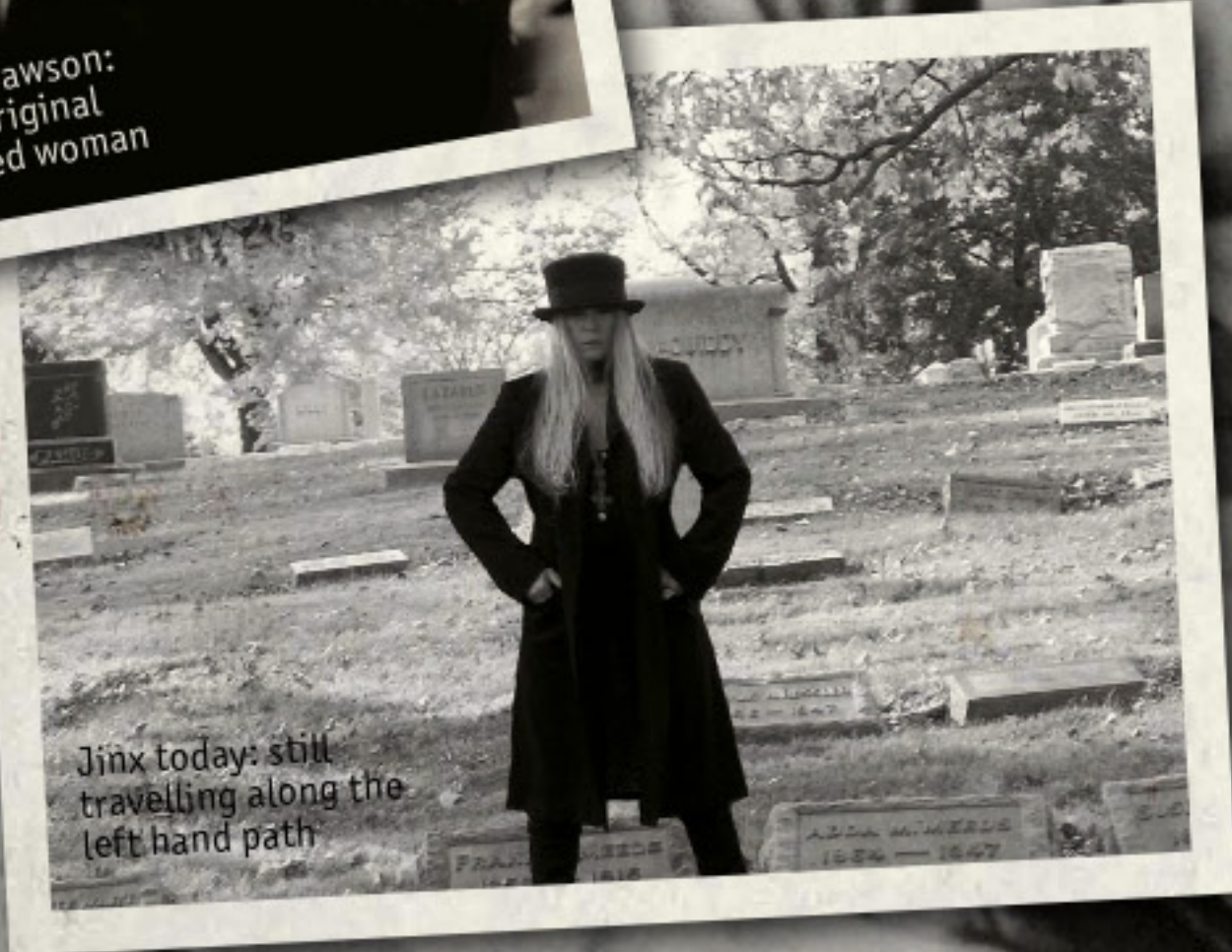
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Coven point the way
for occult rock



Jinx Dawson:
the original
wicked woman



Jinx today: still
travelling along the
left hand path



SEASON

Coven were the patron sinners of occult rock and the precursors to Black Sabbath. Four decades after their last album proper they have returned from the shadows.

WORDS: CHRIS CHANTLER.

"I came from a family of Left Hand Path ancestry, born into a very long lineage of Occult Adepts and Practitioners Of The Ancient Arts. Some of them were members of the United Ancient Order Of Druids.

Others were members of the Rosicrucian group Ordo Aureæ et Rosæ Crucis, Order Of The Golden And Rosy Cross. Members of my family were also active in Freemasonry. My father was a 33rd degree Scottish Rite Mason, and my grandfather was High Priest of the Royal Arch Masons. So I am steeped in American Illuminati."

Clearly, Jinx Dawson is the real deal. Forty-five years since her occult psych pioneers Coven unleashed their shocking, other-worldly debut, *Witchcraft Destroys Minds And Reaps Souls* – the world's first devotedly diabolist rock LP – her influence has never

been stronger, with wicked-woman-fronted occult psych/doom bands still forming every other day. When a teenage Geezer Butler was reading Dennis Wheatley novels about aristocratic families sworn to theurgical oaths in hidden ceremonies, Jinx was living it. She fondly remembers the old Italianate mansion in Indianapolis where her elder relatives resided, "filled with images and tools of the occult and post-Victorian spiritualism. I walked there almost every day to peruse the large library, which included old handwritten texts. I was also privy to certain occult ceremonies during

my childhood. Some say one should live the blues to play the blues. And so, one should live the occult to play the occult..."

After becoming the youngest student to complete a two-year opera scholarship at Butler University, she

hooked up with fellow Left Hand Path practitioners drummer Steve Ross and bassist Oz Osborne (more on that name later) to form Coven, a vehicle for Jinx's extraordinary voice, aesthetic and belief system. She has shown a great deal of loyalty to the Coven name ever since, even when her own is if anything more readily identifiable, something acknowledged in the title of Coven's new album, *Jinx*.

"I decided on the Coven name back in 1967. A homage to my ancestors," she explains. "My loyalty remains steadfast as other groups over the years called themselves Coven. I took an oath to carry the flame. It is more important to me than money or fame."

The controversy caused by Coven's obsessive, dark debut (notoriously featuring a recording of a 'Satanic Mass') was foreshadowed when less committed, label-hired guitarist Jim Donlinger refused to appear on the sleeve; having written songs like *Pact With Lucifer* and *Dignitaries Of Hell* and, it seems he became concerned about dabbling with dark forces.

"He wanted his photograph removed from the cover and left the group just before the album printing," recalls Jinx. "He was wary of the album content and was not a practising LHP as the three of us were."

At first, promotion was hampered by the band's resolute need for their beliefs and

The Devil
doesn't just
have the
best tunes



COVEN
SUBTERRANEA
GOING UNDERGROUND

OF THE WITCH

practices to remain in the shadows: "We made a point to never sign an autograph nor answer questions. We did not want much personal exposure. I only cared that the album be released for a scholarly purpose."

However, far more serious problems arose when *Esquire* magazine printed an article linking occult influences on the hippy counterculture with the 1969 Manson Family murders – illustrated with a photograph of Charles Manson clutching a copy of Coven's debut. Consequently their major label, Mercury Records, pulled all support for the band.

"The Manson murders happened the same summer our first single *Wicked Woman* was released," Jinx concedes, "then the album followed a few weeks later. As the press stories grew on the Tate killings, our label became uneasy. By winter 1969 we had to part ways because they did in part stop a world tour and the albums were removed from the stores. Manson had nothing to do with us. We were angry our album and tour had been banned due to the fear that had spread over the killings. We never had any contact with any Manson members."

Jinx was just 17 when she formed Coven. Their

album title warned that witchcraft destroys minds; was she ever exposed to experiences so dark, frightening that she contemplated repudiating the occult?

"I never considered walking another path," she affirms, "but a demon was summoned in a hurried ceremony in 1969 in Chicago that had swung out of control. My beloved cat Paimon ended up dead as a result when I banished the demon into the cat so it would not harm any in the coven. So I was careful from that night forward in what ceremonies we decided to do."

Coven's most legendary instance of spooky synchronicity is that, as well as featuring a member named Oz Osborne, their 1969 debut opened with a song called *Black Sabbath*. In 1970 Black Sabbath were described by celebrated rock writer Lester Bangs as "England's answer to Coven"; that same year

"A CEREMONY IN 1969 SWUNG OUT OF CONTROL. A DEMON WAS SUMMONED; MY CAT WAS KILLED"

JINX DAWSON GETS MORE THAN SHE BARGAINED FOR



the bands' paths crossed in Memphis, where Satanic symbols were scrawled onto the freaked-out Brummies' dressing room door by mischievous Coven roadies who suspected Sabbath

of cashing in on Coven's notoriety.

"There was indeed a close connection," Jinx reveals. "The first Sabbath single, *Evil Woman*, was written by the band Crow, who were with our management company, and it was on our publishing company, Yuggoth Music. And their first records were on subsidiaries of Mercury Records, our label. So there were definitely business manipulations there. I later talked with a Mercury executive and he confirmed as much. Record industry manipulation or coincidence? Only a few know."

Coven's early style was dubbed 'Heavy Underground Musick' by US FM stations of the day, but while Sabbath were pioneering heavy metal, Coven's records became more accessible, at times prefiguring the Buckingham-Nicks era of Fleetwood Mac.

COVEN

SUBTERRANEA

GOING UNDERGROUND

Coven conjure
a black sabbath

"It was a record label decision," comments Jinx. "The suits did not want a blonde female screaming chants to demons in the early 70s, they simply wanted to sell safer, watered-down versions, not controversial realities. So we tried to appease them by slipping in lighter selections, awaiting a time when we would be allowed to return to our extreme occult roots."

It would take a very long time indeed. Coven resurfaced in 2008 with *Metal Goth Queen – Out Of The Vault* 1976-2007, a compilation of rare material, but although Jinx is the first Coven studio album since 1974, it's emerging only a year later than planned.

"I always knew that in 2013 there had to be a new Coven album released. My connection with the number 13 is very strong. So in the spring I started to formulate a plan. I went through old Coven tapes and found a few unfinished works that had never been released. Our good friend, guitarist Tommy Bolin, had played slide and lead on *Danger/Juju Goat* just before his untimely death in 1976. I finished the lyrics and added new parts and it came together in days, as did the others. Composition comes very swift for me; I do not like to mull over or tinker too much with songs."

It's heartening to behold the post-millennial renaissance of Coven. For decades, *Witchcraft...* seemed destined to remain an unfindable curio suffused with arcane mystique, occasionally referenced in early histories of rock's flirtation with Satan. In recent years,

however, its influence on new generations has been freshly energised, and the breadth of Coven's aesthetic innovation has been rightly acknowledged; for starters, they were the first rock band to throw devil horns.

"I always think I should have trademarked it back in the day," Jinx laughs. "What a pot of gold that would have been. But my ancestors would be furious knowing that it hath become so ubiquitous. It was their secret sign of acknowledgement of the LHP

for many generations before them. I lost a good deal of my inheritance over exposing that sign and was banished from

their coven for quite a long time for my deeds of revealing. But musick about demons, sin and secrets... How can that *not* be enticing to a new generation?"

And what future is foretold for Coven in Jinx's crystal ball? "We have been asked to headline numerous festivals in Europe and shows in the US," she reveals. "We have been at intense gatherings regarding our future. We are letting the cards fall where they may. So mote it be. Though I have much loyalty to the past, I live in the present. I am more adept at my crafts than I have ever been. It's all been quite a life this time around – even the worst was great..." ✱

**JINX IS OUT NOW VIA
NEVOC MUSIC COMPANY**

Jinx Dawson: luminous
mistress of the Illuminati

HEAVY METAL

MILESTONES

YEAR
...1969COVEN RECORD A
'SATANIC MASS'

The 13-minute 'Satanic Mass' that closes Coven's *Witchcraft...* debut is assembled by the band's Lovecraft-obsessed producer Bill Traut, owner of Dunwich Records and producer for US psych band HP Lovecraft (whose name was his idea). The wording is cobbled together from the writings of Church Of Satan founder Anton LaVey (who already released *The Satanic Mass* LP in 1968) and British occult novelist Dennis Wheatley, as well as more obscure sources like a 13th-century French mystery play and a 1931 guide to ceremonial magic. Although the *Wonderful World Of Disney*-style oration renders the piece pure theatrical high camp, lines like "I deny Jesus Christ the deceiver", "Hail Satan" and "Kiss the Goat!" shock 60s America and open up dark new aesthetics for rock musicians and audiences to revel in.

ALSO IN METAL...

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MESSANGER
SUBTERRANEA
GOING UNDERGROUND



Messenger (left to right):
Khaled Lowe, Jaime Gomez
Arellano, Barnaby Maddick

Mercury Rising

WORDS: DOM LAWSON. PICS: TINA KORHONEN.

Featuring ex-Purson members and one of metal's most sought-after producers, Messenger's prog-psych masterpiece is touching a deep and far-ranging nerve.

One of the most heartening aspects of modern music-obsessed life is that the world of heaviness seems to increasingly exhibit an enlightened mindset, resulting in a lot of bands and records that would previously have been regarded as existing far beyond our scene's perimeter fence becoming as acclaimed and celebrated as those that adhere to metal's sturm und drang template. Every now and then, a hazily perverse curveball is flung our way, and whether we consider ourselves to be fans of progressive rock and the avant-garde or simply "a bit of everything", an increasing number of us are poised and ready to make the catch.

Emerging from the shadows of the rock and metal underground, Messenger are a band about whom

you may be hearing a lot over the coming months. Already approved by the mainstream press and, thanks in part to the involvement of celebrated producer Jaime Gomez Arellano (Electric Wizard/Cathedral/Hexvessel), surfing the kind of buzz that's seldom afforded to makers of such idiosyncratic music, they are about to release their debut album, *Illusory Blues*. It is one of the most beautiful and shrewdly constructed albums you'll hear this year; a dazzling amalgam of 70s prog and folk aesthetics, timeless melodic thrust and spine-tingling dynamics, it is certain to delight fans of Opeth, Steven Wilson and Jeff Buckley, plus a great number of *Hammer* readers who are, perhaps, more usually enthralled by sounds from the extreme end of the musical spectrum. As founder member and vocalist/guitarist Khaled Lowe

explains, the road to this hopeful moment in time was as languorous and expectation-free as can be...

"I'd been jamming with quite a few people including Barnaby [Maddick, guitarist/vocalist] and there'd been a few incarnations along the way," he recalls. "After saving a bit of money I wanted to make an album. We didn't have enough material but Gomez came to mind – I knew his reputation and loved his work – so it came to a point where I said, 'OK, we've got this amount of money, we've got enough sections of music to write an album, so let's pay for the studio...' Gomez said, 'OK, this is a proper session!' Barnaby had a few bits to contribute and it all came together nicely."

"It was about organising the ideas and writing and that's pretty much what we did," adds Gomez, not just Messenger's producer but

now full-time bassist. "Some ideas came out in the studio while we were jamming. The record came together in about a month, aside from the ideas that they'd put together before. There was no set idea, like 'We're going to do this!' It was all very spontaneous."

Recorded at Gomez's Orgone Studio in London, *Illusory Blues* is one of those rare albums that could have been released at any point during the last 45 years. Although sonically pristine, it exudes a warmth and depth of intent that belies its breezy, spontaneous gait, as songs like serene opener *The Return* and the woozily epic *Midnight* bring the power of emotional fragility and creative strength together in an explosion of melodic elegance. In fact, it's not hard to imagine that if they were



able to travel in time, they could have been major players in the late-60s prog explosion, such is their sublime mastery of both simplicity *and* intricacy and their apparent immunity to the crass reliance on modern technology and transient trends that sullies so much supposedly heavy music in 2014.

"I've always had this obsession with music from that time," Khaled says. "Our sound just happened, to be honest. Sometimes I'd be on holiday and get an acoustic guitar and start jamming a few chords. Other times we'd gather a bunch of people, plug in a load of effects pedals and go a bit krautrock. I guess, in the end, the natural route was to go into the studio.

Orchestra," adds Barnaby. "With that band there was so much beauty and yet so much craziness in there too. Then there are bands like Godspeed You! Black Emperor, bands that have that incredible build-up and dynamics. We wanted that same level of liberation, you know?"

"Back in the days of 24-track recording, people had to be *pure*," Khaled argues. "There was no dilution as there is now with the internet. You really had to dig to find the good stuff. People would put out one record, they wouldn't have enough money to promote or distribute it and they'd put all their finances into one project. I love the idea of undiscovered

James Leach – plainly have serious artistic aspirations and while their delight at the way that *Illusory Blues* fell thrillingly into place is undeniable, there remains a strong sense that this band and this album would not have happened were it not for a collective need to exorcise a demon or three. Songs as wonderfully yet subtly dramatic as the violin-embellished *Piscean Tide* may have arrived fresh from the unknowable ether, but their creators' real-life experiences are writ large across every note.

"When we were mastering the album, Gomez came up with a whole bunch of songtitles based on lyrics that we'd written," Khaled recalls. "Only *then* did we

arse kicked, there's that very human notion of recovery and healing yourself. We went through those bad experiences and instead of grieving and mourning, we decided to take all this creativity and do something with it. As cheesy as it sounds, it was all part of a healing process. What's important to all of us is a sense of being able to relate to something, lyrically or musically, regardless of genre. It's that atmosphere that makes you well up or provokes any kind of emotional reaction."

"All of that stuff just *happened* when we made the album," Gomez interjects. "Nothing was planned."

"And that made it all the more magical," Khaled concludes.

"I love the idea of undiscovered gems, and that's the spirit we tapped into for this album"

KHALED LOWE ON HIS LOVE OF FOUND SOUND

Gomez has a load of interesting equipment and he'd suggest things, like an autoharp, flute or whatever, and we naturally expanded the sound we had and tried different things to see what would work."

"Coming into the studio, one of the bands that we talked about and praised was [legendary 70s jazz fusion crew] Mahavishnu

gems, and I think that's the spirit we tapped into for this album."

Although cheerful and amiable in person, Messenger's three-man creative core – this project having now been transformed into a bona fide band via the recruitment of guitarist Dan Knight and bassist

discover that there was a massive concept running through the album. That was incidental. Me and Barney had been through some pretty rough times in life and it's all in there. In the first song, the bridge section, there's the lyric '*Even time can love ensnare, even loss can love repair.*' No matter how much you get your

"What came out was a mirroring of what we were feeling internally. There was conflict and a will to resolve that conflict at the same time. So who's to say that the next album won't sound really upbeat, happy and uplifting?" ✚

ILLUSORY BLUES IS OUT NOW VIA SVART

ALBUMS



Autopsy

TOURNIQUETS, HACKSAWS AND GRAVES

| PEACEVILLE |

San Fran's death metal pioneers stage an ambush

“We were there, then we were not, then we were there.” So runs the

official biography on Autopsy's Facebook page, and the maverick, trailblazing San Franciscan foursome's 14-year hiatus now happily seems a distant memory – albeit one full of great Abscess albums. Since 2009's comeback seven-inch, *Horrific Obsession*, the reactivated death metal luminaries have been feverishly making up for lost time with compilations, DVDs, an EP and three new studio albums, this latest emerging just eight months after 2013's *The Headless Ritual*. So *Tourniquets, Hacksaws And Graves* is a surprise of near-Bowie-sized proportions; it seems nobody knew Autopsy had already recorded another 50 minutes of foul-stinking horror-doom-death shot through with caustic dollops of aggro punk. These are immediately evident on crusty two-minute opening salvo *Savagery*, beginning like *Twisted Mass Of Burnt Decay* on 45rpm before bursting into d-beat frenzy with jittery razor guitars. This is counterpointed against *King Of Flesh Ripped*, a more moody headbanger with twisted gothic harmonised guitars. The title track contains surprisingly elegant melodies and tricky structures behind its simple, bludgeoning main riff, while *Deep Crimson Dreaming* edges closer to the bestial psychedelic death-sludge of Abscess. *Burial* is out-and-out snail's-pace doom – until a final minute of



frantic Slayerized grind – and *The Howling Dead* drunkenly molests the rotting corpse of early Sabbath.

It's moot to question whether post-2009 Autopsy are spreading themselves too thinly; there's plenty to get your teeth into here. Although rough edges continue to be polished off of this once-legendarily stoned band's performance and sound, there's a wild, spontaneous and human chemistry to Autopsy's derangement – refreshing in a genre where clinical mechanical dexterity often seems the highest priority. You can't really get away with the under-production of early classics like *Mental Funeral* and *Acts Of The Unspeakable* in 2014, which might continue to peeve some underground purists, but 25 years since their seminal

debut Autopsy remains one of the most fearsome cult names in extreme metal.

8

CHRIS CHANTLER



Ancient Ascendant

ECHOES AND CINDER

| CANDLELIGHT |

British deathsters rise up to the next level

Ancient Ascendant have been steadily building their name over the last few years and have been around in one guise or other for at least a decade, despite not releasing their debut until 2011. This year sees them truly take flight and *Echoes And Cinder* is a prime example of a band taking their sweet time to perfect their sound before unleashing it. Their death metal is blackened around the edges and has much in common with genre leaders Amon Amarth, particularly in Alex Butler's vocal delivery. *Crones To The Flames* is a spryly paced, rollicking first tune and while the momentum continues to be ramped ever upward throughout the record, Ancient Ascendant do much to show that they aren't completely about speed. The light instrumental *Embers* is a lovely sidestep that leads deftly into the fist-pumping melody of *To Break The Binds*. Guitars soar and wail in all the right places with solos ringing over the embattled landscapes of *The Toll Of Morning* with confidence and command.

Echoes... should make Ancient Ascendant huge and they deserve it 10-fold.

8

CHERYL CARTER



Doctor Livingstone

CONTEMPTUS SAECULI

| OSMOSE |

Polymorphously perverse Gauls rattle their box of tricks

Most likely operating from a distinctly unhygienic backroom surgery somewhere in the French underground, Doctor Livingstone – a composite of members and musical influences from the perversely blackened Arkhon Infestus, death metal minions Mutilation and thrashers Zoldier Noidz – have created quite the monster with *Contemptus*

Saeculi. *Starting The Fire* ignites with spurts of turbo-charged grind and deranged yelps before erupting into the power grooves and sustained full-blast fervour of *He Beneath The Scenery*, an effective establishment of the sonic foundations of the record. But just when you think you have their number, attempts at categorisation prove premature with the introduction of an organ solo. From hereon in things only get weirder, in a chaotic mélange of horror punk, black metal, gothic overture, choirs of Deadites and animalistic exhortations. In the hands of another band this mish-mash of subgenres might lack cohesion, but Doctor Livingstone stitch with finesse, largely thanks to their uncanny ability to attack viciously and groove irresistibly while not

7 taking any of it too seriously.

TOM COCKSEY



Massacre

BACK FROM BEYOND

| CENTURY MEDIA |

Florida's death metal masters reborn in glory

As any death metal diehard will tell you, Massacre were one of the most important bands to emerge from the genre's late 80s heyday, and their 1991 debut *From Beyond* remains a seldom disputed classic. As a result, *Back From Beyond* – the true follow-up to its titular predecessor, 1996's cack-handed *Promise* being best forgotten – arrives burdened by immense expectation. Thankfully, despite the absence of original vocalist Kam Lee, this is both a triumphant reaffirmation of the band's old-school values and a smart reminder that death metal's formula requires no tinkering when handled by experts. Devastatingly heavy and sonically pristine, pulverising anti-hymns like *Ascension Of The Deceased* and *Remnants Of Hatred* have infectious, carnivorous riffs bursting from every scabbed pore, while singer Ed Webb steps ably into Kam's shoes, delivering a powerhouse vocal performance that puts most of the modern scene's unintelligible garglers to shame. Neither stuck in the past nor needlessly enamoured of high-tech sterility, this is the sound of a great band tapping back into their own potent, untamed essence and

7

skillfully extending a hallowed legacy.

DOM LAWSON



Nocturnal

STORMING EVIL

| HIGH ROLLER |

Thrashers go where zombies and beer kegs fear to tread

With names like Tyrannizer, Avenger, Vomitor and Skullsplitter on the books, it was always a safe bet that Nocturnal weren't a bluegrass outfit. Blasting out a brutal barrage in the vein of the classic Teutonic triumvirate of Sodom, Kreator and Destruction, Nocturnal are part of a burgeoning underground exhuming the corpse of 80s thrash and gleefully skullfucking it. This, their third full-length album, follows its predecessors – 2004's *Arrival Of The Carnivore* and 2009's *Violent Revenge* – in dishing up 10 tracks of thrashing, bashing and crashing, lots of screaming about death, darkness and demons, all accompanied by a great deal of gurning, grimacing and general grimness. It's as entertaining as it is interchangeable and it hardly matters what the songs are called or what order they're in. We could change the album title to *Infernal Aggression* or *Toxic Genocide* and it'd all still work just fine. The retro thrash thing is arguably getting a bit old, but unless you've got enough of it to last you the rest of your life, you could do worse than check this out.

6

GREG MOFFITT



Nocturnal Breed

NAPALM NIGHTS

| AGONIA |

Norway's black/thrashers reload their bullet belts

Based in Oslo and with roots in a dozen Norwegian black and death metal bands, Nocturnal Breed have regrouped after a seven-year hiatus for another assault on our collective eardrums. Expect no surprises here; *Napalm Nights* carries on where 2007's very highly regarded *Fields Of Rot* left off.

Their stock-in-trade is that place where 80s thrash and modern black metal meet filthy old-school rock for an almighty ruck; think Immortal doing Motörhead songs in a dingy bar serving bootleg whiskey, while Aura Noir set about you with baseball bats. Opening bruiser *The Devil Swept The Ruins* bears all the hallmarks of Extreme Aggression-era Kreator while the title track brings to mind Coroner. *Thrashiac* does exactly what it says on the tin. Look out for a guest appearance from Darkthrone's Nocturno Culto, who adds his roar to supplement SA Destroyer's Abbath/Lemmy-like gravelly throat. Fans of the bullet belt and aviator shades combo will love this; or of Witchery

7

and Desaster, if you prefer.

ALASTAIR RIDDELL



Nux Vomica

NUX VOMICA

| RELAPSE |

Portland's colossal crust metallers reach critical mass

Nux Vomica's sound is somewhat difficult to pin down with their range incorporating death metal, crust, soaring melodies, doom, sludge and an undercurrent of political melancholy, and these many elements combine to imbue the band with a heady passion and a distinctly emotive force. *Nux Vomica* is their first record in nearly five years and, while the band has been gaining a near-cult status, they have also been creating their best work to date. *Sanity Is For The Passive* rolls on a punk-driven beat before stepping back into darker, sludgier territory and allowing the fiery vocals of the group to take centre stage and flash with a dangerous fervour. *Reeling* takes an altogether more despondent approach and the second of three tracks is a gorgeous, weighty, melodious

piece that drives at the heart and cuts it in two with scorched vocals offsetting the otherwise gorgeous progressions of the song. *Choked At The Roots* closes the album on notes of fury and the opposing moments of serenity build the atmosphere of *Nux Vomica* into a delirious ride into complete finality.

8

CHERYL CARTER



Order Of Isaz

SEVEN YEARS OF FAMINE

| SEASON OF MIST |

Scandic gloom-mongers put their faith in flour power

Hero worship can be a dangerous game and Order Of Isaz fearlessly walk the tightrope, their obvious love of Fields Of The Nephilim and all manner of old-school gothic rock writ large across every overwrought melody and grotesque flourish on their full-length debut. But where many bands render themselves redundant by merely repeating someone else's tried and tested shtick, this lot have both the songs and enough overt idiosyncrasy to ensure that *Seven Years Of Famine* is as fresh as can be. Never afraid to crank up the metallic side of their sound – *The Blackened Flame* is a dead spit for *Crimson-era* Sentenced – and yet equally comfortable delving into elegiac balladry (*Dancing Shadows*) and scorching pomp (*Drowning*), these morose Swedes are wringing vitality from a well-worn formula, vocalist Tobias Sidegård's wavering baritone providing the blackest of sugary cake decoration. Hitting a peak of potency on the stately but menacing waltz of *Umbra Sombra* and the genuinely unnerving *Father Death*, this is a cobwebbed triumph aimed squarely at those for whom life's glass is forever half-empty.

7

DOM LAWSON



Dread Sovereign

ALL HELL'S MARTYRS

| VÁN |

Primordial frontman seals his doom

The promise hinted at with last year's *Pray To The Devil In Man* EP has come to fruition. 'Epic' is a much overused hyperbole these days (four pints in a Wetherspoon's is not epic!) but Ireland's Primordial certainly fit the bill, and singer Alan Nemtheanga brings the same sense of drama and grandeur that makes them, and indeed Dread Sovereign, so spellbinding. One of metal's most captivating frontmen has done it again, this time with Primordial drummer Sol Dubh and Zom/Wizards Of Firetop Mountain man Bones in tow to provide some serious classy heavy metal. Billed as a mix of Cirith Ungol, Venom and Saint Vitus, *All Hell's Martyrs'* arcane grooves evoke the spirit of Candlemass's forgotten doom classic *From The 13th Sun*, as well the epic majesty of early Solitude Aeternus, all the while maintaining a strong identity all their own. Boasting a massive production that is warm and organic without surrendering to faux retro fuzz, this an assured record that belies its debut status. Ambient horror soundtrack segments like *The Devil's Venom* segue into colossal slabs of doom-laden riffing, while sharing *Hour Of 13's* knack for making misery memorable. *Cathars To Their Doom* may well be the doom anthem of 2014.

8

ALASTAIR RIDDELL



Original Sins

A CLASSIC ALBUM FROM THE DARKEST VAULT



ULVER | Themes From William Blake's 'The Marriage Of Heaven And Hell' | JESTER

Despite having been dead for 171 years, artist and poet William Blake had a career high in 1998. Alongside Bruce Dickinson's Blakean masterpiece *The Chemical Wedding*, Ulver unleashed this opus, a seminal text in

the late-90s flowering of radical, avant-garde impulses in the Norwegian black metal scene. Having just released their most caustic and raw black metal artefact *Nattens Madrigal*, Kristoffer 'Garm' Rygg steered Ulver into

headfuck orbit, setting Blake's mystical prophecies to a soundscape of electronic, ambient, industrial, drum and bass and trip-hop with effects-laden metal guitars, densely layered, chaotic but wrought with conviction.

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Mgła

SVARTIDAUÐI/GRAVE MIASMA/
ONE TAIL ONE HEAD

THE DOME, LONDON

Polish black metal cult gather the masses

Mgła bring the danger back to black metal

Black metal constantly is constantly shifting and warping in its current predilections but one thing is always true and that's that bands who have a genuine presence will always be wanted. One such project is the Polish group Mgła, and their 2012 record *With Hearts Toward None* is fast becoming a modern black metal classic. The record caused waves deep in the underground but it's clear from the hordes here tonight that they've broken free of the shackles of being known only by a select few to become a much more prominent entity. The anticipation that electrifies the air is discernible and the evening promises to be one of extreme intensity – if you can get into the venue. The military level entry requirements mean that many are left queuing for well over an hour and as such openers **ONE TAIL ONE HEAD** [6] start much later than billed. Whether this pushing around of set times has affected them much is known only to the band but they certainly show their frustrations with a set that lacks spirit. It's not the greatest of starts but **GRAVE MIASMA** [8] and their deeply unsettling blackened death metal rights the wrongs with huge weighty sound and bottomless vocal invocations.

SVARTIDAUÐI [8] suffer some horrendous sound issues that leave their guitars feeling too quiet for the space but the band push through to deliver an incredibly powerful performance. The unholy proclamations of *Flesh Cathedral* vibrate in the air before **MGŁA** [9], with black coverings over their entire faces, take to the stage. With the same muddy sound problems initially, it feels a little disappointing yet the band are so tight and so outrageously good that they completely render any problems to dust. Their set borrows heavily from *With Hearts Toward None* but they still step into their catalogue enough to sate the most rabid fans' lust for their singular sound. *With Hearts Toward None III* is undoubtedly the highlight of the night, though, and the track is monumental. M.'s disgustingly on-point vocal lifts the song to its tipping point before the slicing guitars finally shine through with the riff that forms the base of the track pulsating with a deadly wrath. *With Hearts Toward None VII* closes Mgła's time on a devastating note, dominating with fiery passion and pushing through the smoke-filled room with a potent disregard for anyone's sanity. Mgła are producing some of the most interesting and dangerous black metal of modern times, don't ever forget the name.

CHERYL CARTER

One Tail One Head: messed up



The Monolith Deathcult

Black Heart, London

Genuine death metal eccentrics are hard to find. The Netherlands' The Monolith Deathcult belong to a rare breed of unapologetic bomb-throwers whose only peers would appear to be the late, lamented Yattering, and whose exuberant combination of groove, electronics and all manner of stylistic wrenches add new layers of lunacy and poker-faced goofiness to their compulsive core. Tonight they turn DM into an ultra-vivid, sci-fi fanboy jamboree where robots stalk the earth, mankind devolves into warrior clans, Sepultura and Slipknot are mischievously channelled and imperious voiceovers lather the whole thing with gleeful, imperious absurdity. TMD don't take themselves seriously, and it's a liberating medium for riotous pomp that comes across as Behemoth's tearaway younger brother. *Wrath Of The Ba'ath* becomes an orgiastic chant while *Human Wave Attack* outpaces Corey Taylor and co to unleash a groove of utterly demented, compulsive brilliance as TMD ramp up our



levels of disbelief to a state of delirium.

JONATHAN SELZER

Svart Crown

DIABOLICAL/ASCARIS/MØRKTÅR

Black Heart, London

Openers **MØRKTÅR** [6] are a curious proposition; there is merit in their bleak compositions, but the flat sound and performance – the vocalist awkwardly giving the crowd the finger while hiding behind his hair – undermines it tonight.

ASCARIS [7] offer a far more professional performance, even if their 'blackened death metal' dynamic lacks a little atmosphere.

DIABOLICAL [9], however, combine the worlds of death and black metal with absolute mastery. Imagine modern-day Behemoth with an added dose of Swedish black magick: a marriage of disciplined brutality and organic darkness that ought to see this veteran outfit become much larger than they are currently. **SVART CROWN** [8] bear a less mystical vibe, opting for a lively and brutal musical assault. Again a combination of black and death is the order of the night, their straightforward performance standing in contrast to the often leftfield technicality of the material.

DAYAL PATTERSON



Oranssi Pazuzu: an affinity for infinity



Necro Deathmort: dub destruction

Oranssi Pazuzu

NECRO DEATHMORT/
EYE OF SOLITUDE

BLACK HEART, LONDON

Psychedelic Finns prise open your third eye

On the face of it, tonight's varied bill doesn't make a whole lot of sense, but all are at the very forefront of their chosen extremes and as such they mould the evening into one that shan't be forgotten. **EYE OF SOLITUDE** [8] begin the night with a line in sophisticated death/doom and the combination of Daniel Neagoe's bottomless vocal and the slow march of his band is overwhelming in its intensity. **NECRO DEATHMORT**'s [8] dub/trip/noise flows over the hot venue and envelopes the crowd in rhythms and beats that invoke some interesting attempts at movement before **ORANSSI PAZUZU** [9] arrive to a hero's welcome and the spaced-out curiosity of *Vino Verso*. The Finns have gained a huge amount of traction on the back of 2013's superb *Valonielu* and tonight they wander through that record and far into the cosmos. Frontman Jun-His wraps his voice around the psychedelic keyboard touches and the band constantly allow the rhythm to carry them forward, each member completely in sync and wonderfully tight. While they only dip into their back catalogue once, Oranssi Pazuzu never disappoint, instead giving the newer material space and time to breathe. They close on the epic nuances of *Ympyrä On Viiva Tomussa*, leaving everyone here tonight feeling as though they've travelled to a distant otherworld.

CHERYL CARTER



The crowd go wild for Toxic Holocaust



Joel Grind uses a different kind of tab book

Toxic Holocaust

EXHUMED

UNDERWORLD, LONDON

Thrash metal gets its savagery back

Adding a blood'n'guts death metal band to a bill headlined by an unapologetically thrash metal outfit is an unusual move, but **EXHUMED** [9] aren't the average DM band. They're technically veterans now, but they're also still recalcitrant, drunken teenagers at heart. Fun is very much on the agenda along with blood, chainsaws and entrails, and they do a damn good job impressing an audience clearly there to see Toxic Holocaust. Exhumed are showmen at heart, and an emergency resuscitation procedure (resuscitation aided via beer bong by the way) during a squealing, roaring guitar solo by a doctor in bloodied-up surgical gear sums them up gloriously. **TOXIC HOLOCAUST** [7] aren't quite as chaotic and intense, and seem relatively ordinary after Exhumed's deranged brutality, but the myriad banging heads and buzzing atmosphere (the air of surprised curiosity prevalent during Exhumed gives way to mania for the headliners) clearly indicate that there's a reason they're headlining. Toxic Holocaust seem to have the gumption and requisite savagery that's missing from their peers such as Municipal Waste as big Slayer riffs and galloping drums elicit a frenzied response from the (mostly surprisingly young) audience. It's a fun set, but the night is Exhumed's, as few can really keep up with them when they're on point.

DANIEL CAIRNS

CONFESSIONS

DEE SNIDER'S BEEN LABELLED MANY THINGS OVER THE YEARS.
BUT AT THE END OF THE DAY, HE JUST WANTS TO ROCK.

DEE SNIDER

WHAT WAS THE STRANGEST PART OF YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH THE PMRC?

"Being named as the poster boy of all the evils in heavy metal, when the fans knew Twisted Sister was one of the *least* offensive bands. So when parents were saying, 'Well you can go and see Mötley Crüe and Slayer, but you can't see Twisted Sister,' kids were like, 'Sure, OK, no problem, we were getting kind of tired of them anyway!'"

HOW WAS IT SWAPPING SPOUSES WITH FLAVOR FLAV FOR WIFE SWAP?

"I look back at it with growing anger, but not because of Flav. Before we did the show the production company insisted they send a psychiatrist to interview every member of my family, including my children, which really offended me. Six months later Flav went after his fiancée with a butcher knife and when her son got in the way, he chased *him* with a butcher knife. So who *didn't* pass the psychiatrist test? Where was the fucking bar set?"

HAVE YOU HAD ANY EXPERIENCE OVER THE YEARS WITH STALKERS?

"I am a bad guy to stalk. People used to come to my house and peer over the fence and that's one thing, but one day some guys climbed over into my yard. I got my chainsaw and went running out after them with it! Needless to say they left very quickly. No one believed that story until

I told it on Howard Stern and one of the guys called up and said, 'Howard, that was me!'"

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU WERE STARSTRUCK?

"I went to the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame and was given a behind-the-scenes tour. As we were about to enter one of the rooms they told me, 'This is a white glove area, please resist any temptation to touch.' I looked at the guy and said, 'I'm Dee fucking Snider, I'm really unaffected by this stuff.' We walk in and on the table was John Lennon's New York t-shirt and Jimi Hendrix's psychedelic painted Flying V. I turned to the guy and said, 'I want to apologise, you needed to tell me not to touch, I would grab the shit out of that.'"



"DON'T STALK ME –
I'LL CHASE YOU
WITH A CHAINSAW!"

DEE SNIDER

WHAT'S THE WORST THING YOU'VE READ ABOUT YOUR BAND DURING YOUR TIME TOGETHER?

"The thing that bothers me in general is the assumption that we only played what we played because that's all we were *capable* of playing. I could have sung anything I wanted, but I wanted to sing straight-ahead rock/metal anthems. AJ Pero [Twisted Sister drummer] was a child prodigy, he played metal because that's what he loved, and that goes for everyone in the band. We loved that music, but that's not all we were capable of doing."

WHAT DO YOU THINK WAS YOUR BIGGEST ONSTAGE DISASTER, ASSUMING YOU'VE HAD ANY?

"I remember we were opening for Y&T and some fucker had these huge, fist-sized metal bolts, and he was throwing them like baseballs. They were flying through drumheads and I could not find this guy. I turned the lights on, I tried to call him out and finally he hit me in the ribs with one, and for the first time ever I ended the show and walked offstage. It still haunts me to this day, that I walked off."

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE YOUR LEAST FAVOURITE DRUG?

"I never did any drugs or drank. My favourite drug is caffeine, and I do it a lot. It's legal and it sure does the job. But booze is probably my least favourite drug. I don't like the effect it has on some people. Coke just seems to make people *really* caffeinated and pot makes people a bit stupid, but they're mellow."



WHAT'S THE MOST DIFFICULT SITUATION YOU'VE EVER FOUND YOURSELF IN?

"Someone tried to kill me with a pick-up truck. It got way out of control, from cutting each other up, to giving each other the finger, to a level I didn't want to go to. Subsequently I was arrested for assault with a deadly weapon for hitting him with a tyre iron as he was trying to rip me out of a partially open window. I wound up spending the night in a New York City jail. That was a bad night."

WHAT WAS YOUR MOST MEMORABLE GROUPIE EXPERIENCE?

"I've been with my wife for 37 years so I really don't have those experiences. The other guys would actually get pissed off with me because attractive girls know they're hot and that you'll put up with anything if they suck your dick, so they have attitude. And since I had no intention of going down that path I was free to call them out on their bullshit and harass them mercilessly. Meanwhile the other guys would look at me like, 'Dude, we're not abstaining!'" ✦

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